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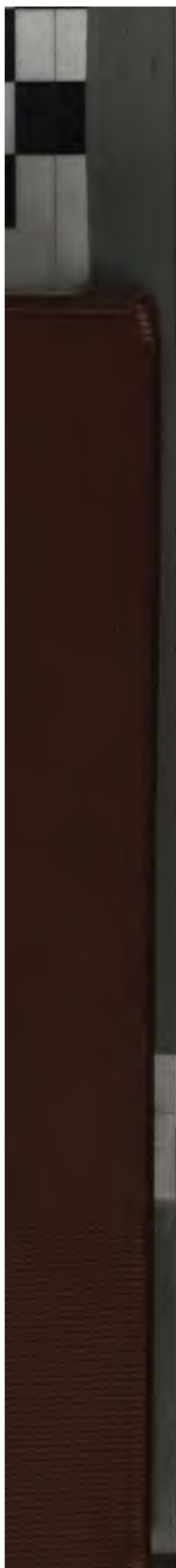
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III.

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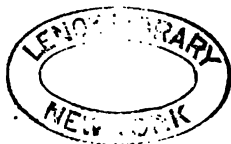
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**CHILDE HAROLD'S
PILGRIMAGE.**

A ROMAUNT.

Quand on n'a vu que son pays , l'univers est un
livre dont on n'a lu que la première page. J'ai
un assez grand nombre, que j'ai trouvées éga-
vaies. Cet examen ne m'a point été infructu-
sais ma patrie. Toutes les impertinences des p-
parmi lesquels j'ai vécu, m'ont réconcilié ave-
j'en'aurais tiré d'autre bénéfice de mes voya-
là, je n'en regretterais ni les frais , ni les f-

LE COS

PREFACE.

THE following poem was written, for the most part, amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. It was begun in Albania; and the parts relative to Spain and Portugal were composed from the author's observations in those countries. Thus much it may be necessary to state for the correctness of the descriptions. The scenes attempted to be sketched are in Spain, Portugal, Epirus, Acarnania, and Greece. There for the present the poem stops : its reception will determine whether the author may venture to conduct his readers to the capital of the East, through Ionia and Phrygia : these two cantos are merely experimental.

A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece ; which, however, makes no pretension to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, « Childe Harold, » I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage : this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim—Harold is the child of imagination, for the purpose I have stated. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such a notion ; but in the main points, I should hope, none whatever.

It is almost superfluous to mention that the appellation « Childe, » as « Childe Waters, » « Childe Childers, » etc. is used as more conso-

nant with the old structure of versification which I have adopted. The « Good Night, » in the beginning of the first canto, was suggested by « Lord Maxwell's Good Night, » in the *Border Minstrelsy*, edited by Mr. Scott.

With the different poems which have been published on Spanish subjects, there may be found some slight coincidence in the first part which treats of the Peninsula, but it can only be casual ; as, with the exception of a few concluding stanzas, the whole of this poem was written in the Levant.

The stanza of Spenser, according to one of our most successful poets, admits of every variety. Dr. Beattie makes the following observation : « Not long ago I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I proposed to give full scope to my inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me ; for, if I mistake not, the measure which I have adopted admits equally of all these kinds of composition (1). » — Strengthened in my opinion by such authority, and by the example of some in the highest order of Italian poets, I shall make no apology for attempts at similar variations in the following composition ; satisfied that, if they are unsuccessful, their failure must be in the execution, rather than in the design sanctioned by the practice of Ariosto, Thomson and Beattie.

(1) Beattie's Letters.

TO IANTHE.

Not in those climes where I have late been straying,
Though Beauty long hath there been matchless deemed;
Not in those visions to the heart displaying
Forms which it sighs but to have only dreamed,
Hath aught like thee in truth or fancy seemed:
Nor having seen thee, shall I vainly seek
To paint those charms which varied as they beamed—
To such as see thee not my words were weak;
To those who gaze on thee what language could they speak?

Ah! may'st thou ever be what now thou art,
Nor unbecome the promise of thy spring,
As fair in form, as warm yet pure in heart,
Love's image upon earth without his wing,
And guileless beyond Hope's imagining!
And surely she who now so fondly rears
Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brightening,
Beholds the rainbow of her future years,
Before whose heavenly hues all sorrow disappears.

Young Peri of the West!—'tis well for me
My years already doubly number thine;
My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on thee,
And safely view thy ripening beauties shine;

Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline ;
Happier, that while all younger hearts shall bleed,
Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes assign
To those whose admiration shall succeed,
But mixed with pangs to Love's even loveliest hours decreed.

Oh ! let that eye, which, wild as the Gazelle's,
Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,
Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells,
Glance o'er this page ; nor to my verse deny
That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh,
Could I to thee be evermore than friend :
This much, dear maid, accord ; nor question why
To one so young my strain I would commend,
But bid me with my wreath one matchless lily blend.

Such is thy name with this my verse entwined ;
And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast
On Harold's page, Ianthe's here enshrined
Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten last :
My days once numbered, should this homage past
Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre
Of him who hailed thee, loveliest as thou wast,
Such is the most my memory may desire ;
'Though more than Hope can claim, could Friendship less
require.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO I.

I.

Oh, thou! in Hellas deem'd of heav'nly birth,
Muse! formed or fabled at the minstrel's will!
Since shamed full oft by later lyres on earth,
Mine dares not call thee from thy sacred hill:
Yet there I've wandered by thy vaunted rill;
Yes! sighed o'er Delphi's long-deserted shrine,
Where, save that feeble fountain, all is still;
Nor mote my shell awake the weary Nine
To grace so plain a tale—this lowly lay of mine.

II.

Whilome in Albion's isle there dwelt a youth,
Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight;
But spent his days in riot most uncount,
And vexed with mirth the drowsy ear of Night.
Ah, me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,
Sore given to revel and ungodly glee;
Few earthly things found favour in his sight
Save concubines and carnal companie,
And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

III.

Childe Harold was he hight :—but whence his na
And lineage long, it suits me not to say ;
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day :
But one sad losel soils a name for aye,
However mighty in the olden time ;
Nor all that heralds rake from confined clay,
Nor florid prose, nor honied lies of rhyme.
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.

IV.

Childe Harold basked him in the noon-tide sun,
Disporting there like any other fly ;
Nor deemed before his little day was done
One blast might chill him into misery.
But long ere scarce a third of his passed by,
Worse than adversity the Childe befell ;
He felt the fulness of satiety :
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell,
Which seemed to him more lone than Eremite's sad

V.

For he through Sin's long labyrinth had run,
Nor made atonement when he did amiss,
Had sighed to many though he loved but one,
And that loved one, alas ! could ne'er be his.
Ah, happy she ! to 'scape from him whose kiss
Had been pollution unto aught so chaste ;
Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
And spoiled her goodly lands to gild his waste,
Nor calm domestic peace had ever deigned to taste.

VI.

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee ;
'Tis said, at times the sullen tear would start,
But Pride congealed the drop within his ee :
Apart he stalked in joyless reverie,
And from his native land resolved to go,
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea ;
With pleasure drugged he almost longed for woe,
And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades below.

VII.

The Childe departed from his father's hall :
It was a vast and venerable pile ;
So old, it seemed only not to fall,
Yet strength was pillared in each massy aisle.
Monastic dome ! condemned to uses vile !
Where Superstition once had made her den,
Now Paphian girls were known to sing and smile ;
And monks might deem their time was come agen,
If ancient tales say true, nor wrong these holy men.

VIII.

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood
Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's brow,
As if the memory of some deadly feud
Or disappointed passion lurked below :
But this none knew, nor haply cared to know ;
For his was not that open, artless soul
That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow,
Nor sought he friend to counsel or condole,
Whate'er this grief mote be which he could not control.

IX. -

And none did love him—though to hall and bower
 He gathered revellers from far and near,
 He knew them flatt'ers of the festal hour;
 The heartless parasites of present cheer.
 Yea! none did love him—not his lovers dear—
 But pomp and power alone are woman's care,
 And where these are light Eros finds a seere;
 Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare,
 And Mammon wins his way where Seraphs might despair.

X.

Childe Harold had a mother—not forgot,
 Though parting from that mother he did shun;
 A sister whom he loved, but saw her not
 Before his weary pilgrimage begun:
 If friends he had, he bade adieu to none.
 Yet deem not thence his breast a breast of steel;
 Ye who have known what 'tis to doat upon
 A few dear objects, will in sadness feel
 Such partings break the heart they fondly hope to heal.

XI.

His house, his home, his heritage, his lands,
 The laughing dames in whom he did delight,
 Whose large blue eyes, fair locks, and snowy hair
 Might shake the saintship of an anchorite,
 And long had fed his youthful appetite;
 His goblets brimmed with every costly wine,
 And all that mote to luxury invite,
 Without a sigh he left, to cross the brine,
 And traverse Paynim shores, and pass Earth's central line.

XII.

The sails were filled, and fair the light winds blew,
 As glad to waft him from his native home;
 And fast the white rocks faded from his view,
 And soon were lost in circumambient foam:
 And then, it may be, of his wish to roam
 Repented he, but in his bosom slept
 The silent thought, nor from his lips did come
 One word of wail, whilst others sate and wept,
 And to the reckless gales unmanly moaning kept.

XIII.

But when the sun was sinking in the sea
 He seized his harp, which he at times could string,
 And strike, albeit with untaught melody,
 When deemed he no strange ear was listening:
 And now his fingers o'er it he did fling,
 And tuned his farewell in the dim twilight.
 While flew the vessel on her snowy wing,
 And fleeting shores receded from his sight,
 Thus to the elements he poured his last "Good Night."

I.

"ADIEU, adieu! my native shore
 Fades o'er the waters blue;
 The Night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,
 And shrieks the wild seamew.
 Yon sun that sets upon the sea
 We follow in his flight;
 Farewell awhile to him and thee,
 My native land—Good Night!"

2.

« A few short hours and he will rise
To give the morrow birth ;
And I shall hail the main and skies,
But not my mother earth.
Deserted is my own good hall,
Its hearth is desolate ;
Wild weeds are gathering on the wall ;
My dog howls at the gate.

3.

« Come hither, hither, my little page !
Why dost thou weep and wail ?
Or dost thou dread the billow's rage,
Or tremble at the gale ?
But dash the tear-drop from thine eye ;
Our ship is swift and strong :
Our fleetest falcon scarce can fly
More merrily along. »

4.

« Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high,
I fear not wave nor wind ;
Yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I
Am sorrowful in mind ;
For I have from my father gone,
A mother whom I love,
And have no friend, save these alone,
But thee—and one above.

5.

« My father blessed me fervently,
Yet did not much complain ;
But sorely will my mother sigh
Till I come back again. »—

« Enough, enough, my little lad !
Such tears become thine eye ;
If I thy guileless bosom had,
Mine own would not be dry.

6.

« Come hither, hither, my staunch yeoman,
Why dost thou look so pale ?
Or dost thou dread a French foeman ?
Or shiver at the gale ? »—
« Deem'st thou I tremble for my life ?
Sir Childe, I'm not so weak ;
But thinking on an absent wife
Will blanch a faithful cheek.

7.

« My spouse and boys dwell near thy hall,
Along the bordering lake,
And when they on their father call,
What answer shall she make ? »—
« Enough, enough, my yeoman good,
Thy grief let none gainsay ;
But I, who am of lighter mood,
Will laugh to flee away.

8.

« For who would trust the seeming sighs
Of wife or paramour ?
Fresh feres will dry the bright blue eyes
We late saw streaming o'er.
For pleasures past I do not grieve,
Nor perils gathering near ;
My greatest grief is that I leave
No thing that claims a tear.

9.

« And now I'm in the world alone,
 Upon the wide, wide sea :
 But why should I for others groan,
 When none will sigh for me?
 Perchance my dog will whine in vain,
 Till fed by stranger hands;
 But long ere I come back again,
 He'd tear me where he stands.

10.

« With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go
 Athwart the foaming brine;
 Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,
 So not again to mine.
 Welcome, welcome, ye dark-blue waves!
 And when you fail my sight,
 Welcome, ye deserts, and ye caves!
 My native land—Good Night ! »

XIV.

On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone,
 And winds are rude in Biscay's sleepless bay.
 Four days are sped, but with the fifth, anon,
 New shores descried make every bosom gay;
 And Cintra's mountain greets them on their way,
 And Tagus dashing onward to the deep,
 His fabled golden tribute bent to pay;
 And soon on board the Lusian pilots leap,
 And steer 'twixt fertile shores where yet few rustics reave.

XV.

rist! it is a goodly sight to see
 Heaven hath done for this delicious land!
 fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
 goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!
 an would mar them with an impious hand;
 then the Almighty lifts his fiercest scourge
 : those who most transgress his high command,
 reble vengeance will his hot shafts urge
 dust host, and earth from fellest foemen purge.

XVI.

beauties doth Lisboa first unfold!
 age floating on that noble tide,
 poets vainly pave with sands of gold,
 w whereon a thousand keels did ride
 ghty strength, since Albion was allied,
 o the Lusians did her aid afford:
 on swoln with ignorance and pride,
 lick yet loathe the hand that waves the sword
 them from the wrath of Gaul's unsparing lord.

XVII.

hoso entereth within this town,
 sheening far, celestial seems to be,
 isolate will wander up and down,
 many things unsightly to strange ee;
 it and palace show like filthily:
 ingy denizens are reared in dirt;
 rsonage of high or mean degree
 care for cleanness of surtout or shirt,
 shent with Egypt's plague, unkempt, unwashed;
 ohurt.

XVIII.

Poor, paltry slaves! yet born 'midst noblest scenes—
Why, Nature, waste thy wonders on such men?
Lo! Cintra's glorious Eden intervenes
In variegated maze of mount and glen.
Ah, me! what hand can pencil guide, or pen,
To follow half on which the eye dilates
Through views more dazzling unto mortal ken
Than those whereof such things the bard relates,
Who to the awe-struck world unlocked Elysium's gates

XIX.

The horrid crags, by toppling convent crowned,
The cork-trees hoar that clothe the shaggy steep,
The mountain-moss by scorching skies imbrowned,
The sunken glen, whose sunless shrubs must weep,
The tender azure of the unruffled deep,
The orange tints that gild the greenest bough,
The torrents that from cliff to valley leap,
The vine on high, the willow branch below,
Mixed in one mighty scene, with varied beauty glow.

XX.

Then slowly climb the many-winding way,
And frequent turn to linger as you go,
From loftier rocks new loveliness survey,
And rest ye at our « Lady's house of woe; »
Where frugal monks their little relics show,
And sundry legends to the stranger tell :
Here impious men have punished been, and lo !
Deep in you cave Honorius long did dwell,
In hope to merit Heaven by making earth a Hell.

XXI.

And here and there, as up the crags you spring,
Mark many rude-carved crosses near the path :
Yet deem not these devotion's offering—
These are memorials frail of murderous wrath :
For wheresoe'er the shrieking victim hath
Poured forth his blood beneath the assassin's knife,
Some hand erects a cross of mouldering lath;
And grove and glen with thousand such are rife.
Throughout this purple land, where law secures not life.

XXII.

On sloping mounds, or in the vale beneath,
Are domes where whilome kings did make repair;
But now the wild flowers round them only breathe ;
Yet ruined splendour still is lingering there.
And yonder towers the Prince's palace fair :
There thou too, Vathek ! England's wealthiest son,
Once formed thy Paradise, as not aware
When wanton Wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,
Meek Peace voluptuous lures was ever wont to shun.

XXIII.

Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan,
Beneath yon mountain's ever beauteous brow :
But now, as if a thing unblest by Man,
Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou !
Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
To halls deserted, portals gaping wide :
Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how
Vain are the pleasaunces on earth supplied ;
Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle tide !

XXIV.

Behold the hall where chiefs were late convened!
Oh! dome displeasing unto British eye!
With diadem hight foolscap, lo! a fiend,
A little fiend that scoffs incessantly,
There sits in parchment robe arrayed, and by
His side is hung a seal and sable scroll,
Where blazoned glare names known to chivalry,
And sundry signatures adorn the roll,
Whereat the Urchin points and laughs with all his so

XXV.

Convention is the dwarfish demon styled
That foiled the knights in Marialva's dome :
Of brains (if brains they had) he them beguiled,
And turned a nation's shallow joy to gloom.
Here Folly dashed to earth the victor's plume,
And Policy regained what arms had lost :
For chiefs like ours in vain may laurels bloom!
Woe to the conquering, not the conquered host,
Since baffled Triumph droops on Lusitania's coast!

XXVI.

And ever since that martial synod met,
Britannia sickens, Cintra! at thy name;
And folks in office at the mention fret,
And fain would blush, if blush they could, for shame!
How will posterity the deed proclaim!
Will not our own and fellow-nations sneer,
To view these champions cheated of their fame,
By foes in fight o'erthrown, yet victors here,
Where Scorn her finger points through many a comi

XXVII.

So deemed the Childe, as o'er the mountains he
Did take his way in solitary guise :
Sweet was the scene, yet soon he thought to flee,
More restless than the swallow in the skies :
Though here awhile he learned to moralize,
For meditation fixed at times on him ;
And conscious Reason whispered to despise
His early youth, mispent in maddest whim ;
But as he gazed on truth his aching eyes grew dim.

XXVIII.

To horse ! to horse ! he quits, for ever quits
A scene of peace, though soothing to his soul :
Again he rouses from his moping fits,
But seeks not now the harlot and the bowl.
Onward he flies, nor fixed as yet the goal
Where he shall rest him on his pilgrimage ;
And o'er him many changing scenes must roll
Ere toil his thirst for travel can assuage,
Or he shall calm his breast, or learn experience sage.

XXIX.

Yet Mafra shall one moment claim delay,
Where dwelt of yore the Lusian's luckless queen ;
And church and court did mingle their array,
And mass and revel were alternate seen ;
Lordlings and freres—ill-sorted fry I ween !
But here the Babylonian whore hath built
A dome, where flaunts she in such glorious sheen,
That men forget the blood which she hath spilt,
And bow the knee to pomp that loves to varnish guilt.

XXX.

O'er vales that teem with fruits, romantic hills,
 (Oh, that such hills upheld a freeborn race!)
 Whereon to gaze the eye with joyaunce fills,
 Childe Harold wends through many a pleasant pl:
 Though sluggards deem it but a foolish chase,
 And marvel men should quit their easy chair,
 The toilsome way, and long, long league to trace
 Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air,
 And life, that bloated Ease can never hope to share

XXXI.

More bleak to view the hills at length recede,
 And, less luxuriant, smoother vales extend:
 Immense horizon-bounded plains succeed!
 Far as the eye discerns, without an end,
 Spain's realms appear whereon her shepherds ten
 Flocks, whose rich fleece right well the trader know
 Now must the pastor's arm his lambs defend:
 For Spain is compassed by unyielding foes,
 And all must shield their all, or share subjection's v

XXXII.

Where Lusitania and her sister meet,
 Deem ye what bounds the rival realms divide?
 Or ere the jealous queens of nations greet,
 Doth Tayo interpose his mighty tide!
 Or dark Sierras rise in craggy pride?
 Or fence of art, like China's vasty wall?—
 Ne barrier wall, ne river deep and wide,
 Ne horrid crags, nor mountains dark and tall,
 Rise like the rocks that part Hispania's land from-G

XXXIII.

But these between a silver streamlet glides,
And scarce a name distinguisheth the brook,
Though rival kingdoms press its verdant sides.
Here leans the idle shepherd on his crook,
And vacant on the rippling waves doth look,
That peaceful still 'twixt bitterest foemen flow;
For proud each peasant as the noblest duke :
Well doth the Spanish hind the difference know
'Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low.

XXXIV.

But ere the mingling bounds have far been passed
Dark Guadiana rolls his power along
In sullen billows, murmuring and vast,
So noted ancient roundelays among.
Whilome upon his banks did legions throng
Of Moor and knight, in mailed splendour drest :
Here ceased the swift their race, here sunk the strong ;
The Paynim turban and the Christian crest
Mixed on the bleeding stream, by floating hosts oppressed.

XXXV.

Oh, lovely Spain ! renowned, romantic land !
Where is that standard which Pelagio bore,
When Cava's traitor-sire first called the band
That dyed thy mountain streams with gothic gore?
Where are those bloody banners which of yore
Waved o'er thy sons, victorious to the gale,
And drove at last the spoilers to their shore?
Red gleamed the cross, and waned the crescent pale;
While Afric's echoes thrilled with Moorish matrons' wail.

XXXVI.

Teems not each ditty with the glorious tale?
 Ah! such, alas! the hero's amplest fate!
 When granite moulders and when records fail,
 A peasant's plaint prolongs his dubious date.
 Pride! bend thine eye from heaven to thine estate
 See how the Mighty shrink into a song!
 Can volume, pillar, pile preserve thee great?
 Or must thou trust Tradition's simple tongue,
 When Flattery sleeps with thee, and History does the

XXXVII.

Awake, ye sons of Spain! awake! advance!
 Lo! Chivalry, your ancient goddess, cries,
 But wields not, as of old, her thirsty lance,
 Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the skies:
 Now on the smoke of blazing bolts she flies,
 And speaks in thunder through yon engine's roar:
 In every peal she calls—"Awake! arise!"
 Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,
 When her war-song was heard on Andalusia's shore?

XXXVIII.

Hark!—heard you not those hoofs of dreadful note
 Sounds not the clang of conflict on the heath?
 Saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote;
 Nor saved your brethren ere they sank beneath
 Tyrants and tyrants' slaves?—the fires of death,
 The bale-fires flash on high:—from rock to rock
 Each volley tells that thousands cease to breathe;
 Death rides upon the sulphury Siroc,
 Red Battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock.

XXXIX.

Lo! where the Giant on the mountain stands,
His blood-red tresses deep'ning in the sun,
With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands,
And eye that scorcheth all it glares upon;
Restless it rolls, now fixed, and now anon
Flashing afar—and at his iron feet
Destruction cowers to mark what deeds are done;
For on this morn three potent nations meet,
To shed before his shrine the blood he deems most sweet.

XL.

By heaven! it is a splendid sight to see
(For one who hath no friend, no brother there)
Their rival scarfs of mixed embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air!
What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair,
And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey!
All join the chase, but few the triumph share;
The grave shall bear the chiefest prize away,
And havoc scarce for joy can number their array.

XLI.

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice;
Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high,
Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies;
The shouts are France, Spain, Albion, Victory!
The foe, the victim, and the fond ally
That fights for all, but ever fights in vain,
Are met—as if at home they could not die—
To feed the crow on Talavera's plain,
And fertilize the field that each pretends to gain.

XLII.

There shall they rot—Ambition's honoured fools!
Yes, Honour decks the turf that wraps their clay!
Vain Sophistry! in these behold the tools,
The broken tools, that tyrants cast away
By myriads, when they dare to pave their way
With human hearts—to what?—a dream alone.
Can despots compass aught that hails their sway?
Or call with truth one span of earth their own,
Save that wherein at last they crumble bone by bone?

XLIII.

Oh, Albuera! glorious field of grief!
As o'er thy plain the Pilgrim pricked his steed,
Who could foresee thee, in a space so brief,
A scene where mingling foes should boast and bleed!
Peace to the perished! may the warrior's meed
And tears of triumph their reward prolong!
Till others fall where other chieftains lead
Thy name shall circle round the gaping throng,
And shine in worthless lays, the theme of transient song!

XLIV.

Enough of Battle's minions! let them play
Their game of lives, and barter breath for fame:
Fame that will scarce reanimate their clay,
Though thousands fall to deck some single name.
In sooth 'twere sad to thwart their noble aim
Who strike, blest hirelings! for their country's good,
And die, that living might have proved her shame;
Perished, perchance, in some domestic feud,
Or in a narrower sphere wild Rapine's path pursued.

XLV.

Fall swiftly Harold wends his lonely way
 Where proud Sevilla triumphs unsubdued :
 Yet is she free—the spoiler's wished-for prey!
 Soon, soon shall Conquest's fiery foot intrude,
 Blackening her lovely domes with traces rude.
 Inevitable hour! 'Gainst fate to strive
 Where Desolation plants her famished brood
 Is vain, or Ilium, Tyre might yet survive,
 And Virtue vanquish all, and Murder cease to thrive.

XLVI.

But all unconscious of the coming doom,
 The feast, the song, the revel here abounds;
 Strange modes of merriment the hours consume,
 Nor bleed these patriots with their country's wounds:
 Not here War's clarion, but Love's rebeck sounds:
 Here folly still his votaries enthralls;
 And young-eyed lewdness walks her midnight rounds:
 Girt with the silent crimes of capitals,
 Still to the last kind Vice clings to the tottering walls.

XLVII.

Not so the rustic—with his trembling mate
 He lurks, nor casts his heavy eye afar,
 Lest he should view his vineyard desolate,
 Blasted below the dun hot breath of war.
 No more beneath soft Eve's consenting star
 Fandango twirls his jocund castanet:
 Ah, monarchs! could ye taste the mirth ye mar,
 Not in the toils of Glory would ye fret;
 The hoarse dull drum would sleep, and Man be happy yet!

XLVIII.

How carols now the lusty muleteer?
 Of love, romance, devotion is his lay,
 As whilome he was wont the leagues to cheer,
 His quick bells wildly jingling on the way?
 No! as he speeds, he chaunts: « Viva el Rey! »
 And checks his song to execrate Godoy,
 The royal wittol Charles, and curse the day
 When first Spain's queen beheld the black-eyed boy,
 And gore-faced Treason sprung from her adulterate joy.

XLIX.

On yon long, level plain, at distance crowned
 With crags, whereon those Moorish turrets rest,
 Wide scattered hoof-marks dint the wounded ground;
 And, scathed by fire, the green sward's darkened vest
 Tells that the foe was Andalusia's guest:
 Here was the camp, the watch-flame, and the host;
 Here the bold peasant stormed the dragon's nest;
 Still does he mark it with triumphant boast,
 And points to yonder cliffs, which oft were won and lost.

L.

And whomsee'er along the path you meet,
 Bears in his cap the badge of crimson hue,
 Which tells you whom to shun and whom to greet:
 Woe to the man that walks in public view
 Without of loyalty this token true:
 Sharp is the knife, and sudden is the stroke;
 And sorely would the Gallic foeman rue,
 If subtle poniards, wrapt beneath the cloke,
 Could blunt the sabre's edge, or clear the cannon's smoke.

LI.

At every turn Morena's dusky height
Sustains aloft the battery's iron load ;
And, far as mortal eye can compass sight,
The mountain-howitzer, the broken road,
The bristling palisade, the fosse o'er-flowed,
The stationed bands, the never-vacant watch,
The magazine in rocky durance stowed,
The holstered steed beneath the shed of thatch,
The ball-piled pyramid, the ever blazing match,

LII.

Portend the deeds to come :—but he whose nod
Has tumbled feeble despots from their sway,
A moment pauseth ere he lifts the rod ;
A little moment deigneth to delay :
Soon will his legions sweep through these their way :
The West must own the Scourger of the world.
Ah! Spain! how sad will be thy reckoning-day,
When soars Gaul's vulture, with his wings unfurled,
And thou shalt view thy sons in crowds to Hades hurled.

LIII.

And must they fall? the young, the proud, the brave,
To swell one bloated Chief's unwholesome reign?
No step between submission and a grave?
The rise of rapine and the fall of Spain?
And doth the power that man adores ordain
Their doom, nor heed the suppliant's appeal?
Is all that desperate valour acts in vain?
And counsel sage and patriotic zeal,
The veteran's skill, youth's fire, and Manhood's heart of steel?

LIV.

Is it for this the Spanish maid, aroused,
 Hangs on the willow her unstrung guitar,
 And, all unsexed, the Anlace hath espoused,
 Sung the loud song, and dared the deed of war?
 And she, whom once the semblance of a scar
 Appalled, an owlet's larum chilled with dread,
 Now views the column-scattering bay'net jar,
 The falchion flash, and o'er the yet warm dead
 Stalks with Minerva's step where Mars might quake to treat

LV.

Ye who shall marvel when you hear her tale,
 Oh! had you known her in her softer hour,
 Marked her black eye that mocks her coal-black ve
 Heard her light, lively tones in Lady's bower,
 Seen her long locks that foil the painter's power,
 Her fairy form, with more than female grace,
 Scarce would you deem that Saragoza's tower
 Beheld her smile in Danger's Gorgon face,
 Thin the closed ranks, and lead in Glory's fearful chase.

LVI.

Her lover sinks—she sheds no ill-timed tear;
 Her chief is slain—she fills his fatal post;
 Her fellows flee—she checks their base career;
 The foe retires—she heads the sallying host:
 Who can appease like her a lover's ghost?
 Who can avenge so well a leader's fall?
 What maid retrieve when man's flushed hope is lost
 Who hang so fiercely on the flying Gaul,
 Foiled by a woman's hand, before a battered wall?

LVII.

Yet are Spain's maids no race of Amazons,
 But formed for all the witching arts of love :
 Though thus in arms they emulate her sons,
 And in the horrid phalanx dare to move,
 'Tis but the tender fierceness of the dove
 Pecking the hand that hovers o'er her mate :
 In softness as in firmness far above
 Remoter females, famed for sickening prate ;
 Her mind is nobler sure, her charms perchance as great.

LVIII.

The seal Love's dimpling finger hath impressed,
 Denotes how soft that chin which bears his touch :
 Her lips, whose kisses pout to leave their nest,
 Bid man be valiant ere he merit such :
 Her glance how wildly beautiful ! how much
 Hath Phæbus wooed in vain to spoil her cheek,
 Which glows yet smoother from his amorous clutch !
 Who round the North for paler dames would seek ?
 How poor their forms appear ! how languid, wan, and weak !

LIX.

Match me, ye climes ! which poets love to laud ;
 Match me, ye harems of the land ! where now
 I strike my strain, far distant, to applaud
 Beauties that ev'n a cynic must avow ;
 Match me those Houries, whom ye scarce allow
 To taste the gale lest Love should ride the wind,
 With Spain's dark-glancing daughters—deign to know,
 There your wise Prophet's paradise we find,
 His black-eyed maids of Heaven, angelically kind.

LX.

Oh, thou Parnassus! whom I now survey,
Not in the phrenzy of a dreamer's eye,
Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,
But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky,
In the wild pomp of mountain majesty!
What marvel if I thus essay to sing?
The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by
Would gladly woo thine Echoes with his string,
Though from thy heights no more one Muse will wave her w

LXI.

Oft have I dreamed of Thee! whose glorious name
Who knows not, knows not man's divinest lore:
And now I view thee, 'tis, alas! with shame
That I in feeblest accents must adore.
When I recount thy worshippers of yore,
I tremble, and can only bend the knee;
Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to soar,
But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy
In silent joy to think at last I look on Thee!

LXII.

Happier in this than mightiest bards have been,
Whose fate to distant homes confined their lot,
Shall I unmoved behold the hallowed scene,
Which others rave of, though they know it not?
Though here no more Apollo haunts his grot,
And thou, the Muses' seat, art now their grave,
Some gentle spirit still pervades the spot,
Sighs in the gale, keeps silence in the cave,
And glides with glassy foot o'er yon melodious wave.

LXIII.

Of thee hereafter.—Ev'n amidst my strain
I turned aside to pay my homage here ;
Forgot the land, the sons, the maids of Spain ;
Her fate, to every free-born bosom dear,
And hailed thee, not perchance without a tear.
Now to my theme—but from thy holy haunt
Let me some remnant, some memorial bear ;
Yield me one leaf of Daphne's deathless plant,
Nor let thy votary's hope be deemed an idle vaunt.

LXIV.

But ne'er didst thou, fair mount ! when Greece was young
See round thy giant base a brighter choir,
Nor e'er did Delphi, when her priestess sung
The Pythian hymn with more than mortal fire,
Behold a train more fitting to inspire
The song of love, than Andalusia's maids,
Nurst in the glowing lap of soft desire :
Ah ! that to these were given such peaceful shades
As Greece can still bestow, though Glory fly her glades.

LXV.

Fair is proud Seville ; let her country boast
Her strength, her wealth, her site of ancient days ;
But Cadiz, rising on the distant coast,
Calls forth a sweeter, though ignoble praise.
Ah, Vice ! how soft are thy voluptuous ways !
While boyish blood is mantling, who can 'scape
The fascination of thy magic gaze ?
A Cherub-hydra round us dost thou gape,
And mould to every taste thy dear delusive shape.

LXVI.

When Paphos felt by Time—accursed Time!
The queen who conquers all must yield to thee—
The Pleasures fled, but sought as warm a clime;
And Venus, constant to her native sea,
To nought else constant, hither deigned to flee;
And fixed her shrine within these walls of white:
Though not to one dome circumscribeth she
Her worship, but, devoted to her rite,
A thousand altars rise, for ever blazing bright.

LXVII.

From morn till night, from night till startled morn
Peeps blushing on the revels laughing crew,
The song is heard, the rosy garland worn,
Devices quaint, and frolics ever new,
Tread on each others' knees. A long adieu
He bids to sober joy that here sojourns:
Nought interrupts the riot, though in lieu
Of true devotion monkish incense burns,
And Love and Prayer unite, or rule the hour by turns.

LXVIII.

The sabbath comes, a day of blessed rest;
What hallows it upon this Christian shore?
Lo! it is sacred to a solemn feast:
Hark! heard you not the forest-monarch's roar?
Crashing the lance, he snuffs the spouting gore
Of man and steed, o'erthrown beneath his horn;
The thronged arena shakes with shouts for more;
Yells the mad-crowd o'er entrails freshly torn,
Nor shrinks the female eye, nor ev'n affects to mourn.

LXIX.

The seventh day this; the jubilee of man.
 London! right well thou know'st the day of prayer :
 Then thy spruce citizen, washed artizan,
 And smug apprentice gulp their weekly air :
 Thy coach of hackney, whiskey, one-horse chair,
 And humblest gig through sundry suburbs whirl,
 To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow make repair ;
 Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to hurl,
 Provoking envious gibe from each pedestrian churl.

LXX.

Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribboned fair,
 Others along the safer Turnpike fly ;
 Some Richmond-hill ascend, some scud to Ware,
 And many to the steep of Highgate hie.
 Ask ye, Bæotian shades! the reason why?
 'Tis to the worship of the solemn Horn,
 Grasped in the holy hand of Mystery,
 In whose dread name both men and maids are sworn,
 And consecrate the oath with draught, and dance till morn.

LXXI.

All have their fooleries—not alike are thine,
 Fair Cadiz, rising o'er the dark blue sea!
 Soon as the matin bell proclaimeth nine,
 Thy saint adorers count the rosary :
 Much is the VIRGIN teased to shrive them free
 (Well do I ween the only virgin there)
 From crimes as numerous as her beadsmen be ;
 Then to the crowded circus forth they fare,
 Young, old, high, low, at once the same diversion share.

LXXII.

The lists are op'd, the spacious area cleared,
Thousands on thousands piled are seated round;
Long ere the first loud trumpet's note is heard,
No vacant space for lated wight is found :
Here dons, grandees, but chiefly dames abound,
Skilled in the ogle of a roguish eye,
Yet ever well inclined to heal the wound ;
None through their cold disdain are doomed to d
As moon-struck bards complain, by Love's sad arc

LXXIII.

Hushed is the din of tongues—on gallant steeds,
With milk-white crest, gold spur, and light-poised l
Four cavaliers prepare for venturous deeds,
And lowly bending to the lists advance ;
Rich are their scarfs, their chargers featly pranc
If in the dangerous game they shine to-day,
The crowds loud shout and ladies lovely glance,
Best prize of better acts, they bear away,
And all that kings or chiefs e'er gain their toils repa

LXXIV.

In costly sheen and gaudy cloak arrayed,
But all afoot, the light-limbed matadore
Stands in the centre, eager to invade
The lord of lowing herds; but not before
The ground, with cautious tread, is traversed o'e
Lest aught unseen should lurk to thwart his speed
His arms a dart, he fights aloof, nor more
Can man achieve without the friendly steed,
Alas! too oft condemned for him to bear and bleed.

LXXV.

Thrice sounds the clarion ; lo ! the signal falls,
The den expands, and expectation mute
Gapes round the silent circle's peopled walls.
Bounds with one lashing spring the mighty brute,
And , wildly staring, spurns, with sounding foot,
The sand, nor blindly rushes on his foe :
Here, there, he points his threatening front, to suit
His first attack; wide waving to and fro
His angry tail ; red rolls his eye's dilated glow.

LXXVI.

Sudden he stops; his eye is fixed : away,
Away, thou heedless boy ; prepare the spear :
Now is thy time, to perish, or display
The skill that yet may check his mad career.
With well-timed croupe the nimble coursers veer ;
On foams the bull, but not unscathed he goes ;
Streams from his flank the crimson torrent clear :
He flies, he wheels, distracted with his throes ;
Dart follows dart; lance, lance; loud bellowings speak his woes.

LXXVII.

Again he comes; nor dart nor lance avail,
Nor the wild plunging of the tortured horse ;
Though man and man's avenging arms assail,
Vain are his weapons, vainer is his force.
One gallant steed is stretched a mangled corse ;
Another, hideous sight! unseamed appears,
His gory chest unveils life's panting source,
Though death-struck still his feeble frame he rears ,
Staggering , but stemming all, his lord unharmed he bears.

LXXVIII.

Foiled, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,
 Full in the centre stands the bull at bay,
 Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,
 And foes disabled in the brutal fray :
 And now the matadores around him play,
 Shake the red cloak, and poise the ready brand :
 Once more through all he bursts his thundering way—
 Vain rage ! the mantle quits the conynge hand,
 Wraps his fierce eye—'tis past—he sinks upon the sand!

LXXIX.

Where his vast neck just mingles with the spine,
 Sheathed in his form the deadly weapon lies.
 He stops—he starts—disdaining to decline :
 Slowly he falls, amidst triumphant cries,
 Without a groan, without a struggle dies.
 The decorated car appears—on high.
 The corse is piled—sweet sight for vulgar eyes—
 Four steeds that spurn the rein, as swift as shy,
 Hurl the dark bulk along, scarce seen in dashing by.

LXXX.

Such the ungentle sport that oft invites
 The Spanish maid, and cheers the Spanish swain.
 Nurtured in blood betimes, his heart delights
 In vengeance, gloating on another's pain.
 What private feuds the troubled village stain !
 Though now one phalanx'd host should meet the foe,
 Enough, alas ! in humble homes remain,
 To meditate 'gainst friends the secret blow,
 For some slight cause of wrath, whence life's warm stream
 must flow.

LXXXI.

But Jealousy has fled : his bars, his bolts,
 His withered centinel, duenna sage :
 And all whereat the generous soul revolts,
 Which the stern detard deemed he could encage,
 Have passed to darkness with the vanished age.
 Who late so free as Spanish girls were seen,
 (Ere War uprose in his volcanic rage),
 With braided tresses bounding o'er the green,
 While on the gay dance shone Night's lover-loving Queen?

LXXXII.

Oh ! many a time, and oft, had Harold loved,
 Or dreamed he loved, since rapture is a dream ;
 But now his wayward bosom was unmoved,
 For not yet had he drunk of Lethe's stream ;
 And lately had he learned with truth to deem
 Love has no gift so grateful as his wings :
 How fair, how young, how soft soe'er he seem,
 Full from the fount of Joy's delicious springs
 Some bitter e'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings.

LXXXIII.

Yet to the beauteous form he was not blind,
 Though now it moved him as it moves the wise ;
 Not that Philosophy on such a mind
 E'er deigned to bend her chastely-awful eyes :
 But Passion raves herself to rest, or flies ;
 And Vice, that digs her own voluptuous tomb,
 Had buried long his hopes, no more to rise :
 Pleasure's palled victim ! life-aborring gloom,
 Wrote on his faded brow ourst Gain's unresting doom.

LXXXIV.

Still he beheld, nor mingled with the throng;
 But viewed them not with misanthropic hate:
 Fain would he now have joined the dance, the so
 But who may smile that sinks beneath his fate?
 Nought that he saw his sadness could abate:
 Yet once he struggled 'gainst the demon's sway,
 And as in Beauty's bower he pensive sate,
 Poured forth this unpremeditated lay,
 To charms as fair as those that soothed his happier c

TO INEZ.

1.

NAY, smile not at my sullen brow,
 Alas! I cannot smile again;
 Yet heaven avert that ever thou
 Should'st weep, and haply weep in vain.

2.

And dost thou ask, what secret woe
 I bear, corroding joy and youth?
 And wilt thou vainly seek to know
 A pang, ev'n thou must fail to soothe?

3.

It is not love, it is not hate,
 Nor low ambition's honours lost,
 That bids me loathe my present state,
 And fly from all I prized the most:

4.

It is that weariness which springs
 From all I meet, or hear, or see:
 To me no pleasure beauty brings;
 Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

5.

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom
The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore;
That will not look beyond the tomb,
But cannot hope for rest before.

6.

What exile from himself can flee?
To zones, though more and more remote,
Still, still pursues, where-e'er I be,
The blight of life—the demon, Thought.

7.

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,
And taste of all that I forsake :
Oh! may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake!

8.

Through many a clime 'tis mine to go,
With many a retrospection curst,
And all my solace is to know
Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

9.

What is that worst? Nay do not ask—
In pity from the search forbear :
Smile on—nor venture to unmask
Man's heart, and view the Hell that's there.

LXXXV.

Adieu, fair Cadiz! yea, a long adieu!
 Who may forget how well thy walls have stood?
 When all were changing thou alone wert true,
 First to be free and last to be subdued:
 And if amidst a scene, a shock so rude,
 Some native blood was seen thy streets to die;
 A traitor only fell beneath the feud:
 Here all were noble, save Nobility;
 None hugged a conqueror's chain, save fallen Chivalry!

LXXXVI.

Such be the sons of Spain, and strange her fate!
 They fight for freedom who were never free;
 A kingless people for a nerveless state,
 Her vassals combat when their chieftains flee,
 True to the veriest slaves of treachery:
 Fond of a land which gave them nought but life,
 Pride points the path that leads to liberty;
 Back to the struggle, baffled in the strife,
 War, war is still the cry, « War even to the knife! »

LXXXVII.

Ye, who would' more of Spain and Spaniards know,
 Go, read whate'er is writ of bloodiest strife:
 Whate'er keen vengeance urged on foreign foe
 Can act, is acting there against man's life:
 From flashing scimitar to secret knife,
 War mouldeth there each weapon to his need—
 So may he guard the sister and the wife,
 So may he make each curst oppressor bleed,
 So may such foes deserve the most remorseless deed!

LXXXVIII.

Flows there a tear of pity for the dead?
 Look o'er the ravage of the reeking plain;
 Look on the hands with female slaughter red;
 Then to the dogs resign the unburied slain,
 Then to the vulture let each corse remain;
 Albeit unworthy of the prey-bird's maw,
 Let their bleached bones, and blood's unbleaching stain,
 Long mark the battle-field with hideous awe:
 Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes we saw!

LXXXIX.

Nor yet, alas! the dreadful work is done,
 Fresh legions pour adown the Pyrenees;
 It deepens still, the work is scarce begun,
 Nor mortal eye the distant end foresees.
 Fall'n nations gaze on Spain; if freed, she frees
 More than her fell Pizarros once enchained.
 Strange retribution! now Columbia's ease
 Repairs the wrongs that Quito's sons sustained,
 While o'er the parent clime prowls Murder unrestrained.

XC.

Not all the blood at Talavera shed,
 Not all the marvels of Barossa's fight,
 Not Albuera lavish of the dead,
 Have won for Spain her well asserted right.
 When shall her olive-branch be free from blight?
 When shall she breathe her from the blushing toil?
 How many a doubtful day shall sink in night,
 Ere the Frank robber turn him from his spoil,
 And Freedom's stranger-tree grow native of the soil!

XCI.

And thou, my friend!—since unavailing woe
 Bursts from my heart, and mingles with the strain—
 Had the sword laid thee with the mighty low,
 Pride might forbid ev'n Friendship to complain :
 But thus unlaureled to descend in vain,
 By all forgotten, save the lonely breast,
 And mix unbleeding with the boasted slain,
 While glory crowns so many a meaner crest!
 What hadst thou done to sink so peacefully to rest!

XCII.

Oh! known the earliest, and esteemed the most!
 Dear to a heart where nought was left so dear!
 Though to my hopeless days for ever lost,
 In dreams deny me not to see thee here!
 And morn in secret shall renew the tear
 Of consciousness awaking to her woes,
 And Fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
 Till my frail frame return to whence it rose,
 And mourned and mourner lie united in repose.

XCIII.

Here is one fytte of Harold's pilgrimage :
 Ye who of him may further seek to know,
 Shall find some tidings in a future page,
 If he that rhymeth now may scribble moe.
 Is this too much? stern critic! say not so :
 Patience! and ye shall hear what he beheld
 In other lands, where he was doomed to go :
 Lands that contain the monuments of Eld,
 Ere Greece and Grecian arts by barbarous hands were quel

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO II.

I.

COME, blue-eyed maid of heaven! but thou, alas!
Didst never yet one mortal song inspire—
Goddess of Wisdom! here thy temple was,
And is, despite of war and wasting fire,
And years, that bade thy worship to expire :
But worse than steel, and flame, and ages slow,
Is the dread sceptre and dominion dire
Of men who never felt the sacred glow
That thoughts of thee and thine on polished breasts bestow.

II.

Ancient of days! august Athena! where,
Where are thy men of might? thy grand in soul?
Gone—glimmering through the dream of things that were :
First in the race that led to Glory's goal,
They won, and passed away—is this the whole?
A school-boy's tale, the wonder of an hour!
The warrior's weapon and the sophist's stole
Are sought in vain, and o'er each mouldering tower,
Dim with the mist of years, grey flits the shade of power.

III.

Son of the morning, rise! approach you here!
 Come—but molest not yon defenceless urn:
 Look on this spot—a nation's sepulchre!
 Abode of gods, whose shrines no longer burn.
 Even gods must yield—religions take their turn:
 'Twas Jove's—'tis Mahomet's—and other creeds,
 Will rise with other years, till man shall learn
 Vainly his incense soars, his victim bleeds;
 Poor child of Doubt and Death, whose hope is built on ree

IV.

Bound to the earth, he lifts his eye to heaven—
 Is't not enough, unhappy thing! to know
 Thou art? Is this a boon so kindly given,
 That being, thou would'st be again, and go,
 Thou know'st not, reck'st not to what region, so
 On earth no more, but mingled with the skies?
 Still wilt thou dream on future joy and woe?
 Regard and weigh yon dust before it flies:
 That little urn saith more than thousand homilies.

V.

Or burst the vanished Hero's lofty mound;
 Far on the solitary shore he sleeps:
 He fell, and falling nations mourned around;
 But now not one of saddening thousands weeps,
 Nor warlike—worshipper his vigil keeps
 Where demi-gods appeared, as records tell.
 Remove yon skull from out the scattered heaps:
 Is that a temple where a God may dwell?
 Why ev'n the worm at last disdains her shattered cell

VI.

Look on its broken arch, its ruined wall,
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul :
Yes, this was once Ambition's airy hall,
The dome of Thought, the palace of the Soul :
Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,
The gay recess of Wisdom and of Wit,
And passion's host, that never brooked control :
Can all, saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,
People this lonely tower, this tenement refit ?

VII.

Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son !
" All that we know is, nothing can be known. "
Why should we shrink from what we cannot shun ?
Each has his pang, but feeble sufferers groan
With brain-born dreams of evil all their own.
Pursue what Chance or Fate proclaimeth best ;
Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron :
There no forced banquet claims the sated guest,
But Silence spreads the couch of ever welcome rest.

VIII.

Yet if, as holiest men have deemed, there be,
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore ;
How sweet it were in concert to adore
With those who made our mortal labours light !
To hear each voice we feared to hear no more !
Behold each mighty shade revealed to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the right !

IX.

There, thou!—whose love and life together fled,
 Have left me here to love and live in vain—
 Twined with my heart, and can I deem thee dead,
 When busy Memory flashes on my brain?
 Well—I will dream that we may meet again,
 And woo the vision to my vacant breast :
 If aught of young remembrance then remain,
 Be as it may futurity's behest,
 For me 'twere bliss enough to know thy spirit blest!

X.

Here let me sit upon this massy stone,
 The marble column's yet unshaken base;
 Here, son of Saturn! was thy fav'rite throne :
 Mightiest of many such! Hence let me trace
 The latent grandeur of thy dwelling place.
 It may not be : nor ev'n can Fancy's eye
 Restore what Time hath laboured to deface.
 Yet these proud pillars claim no passing sigh;
 Unmoved the Moslem sits, the light Greek carols by.

XI.

But who, of all the plunderers of yon faue
 On high, where Pallas lingered, loth to flee
 The latest relic of her ancient reign ;
 The last, the worst, dull spoiler, who was he?
 Blush, Caledonia! such thy son could be!
 England! I joy no child he was of thine :
 Thy free-born men should spare what once was free
 Yet they could violate each saddening shrine,
 And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant brine.

XH.

But most the modern Pict's ignoble boast,
To rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time hath spared :
Cold as the crags upon his native coast,
His mind as barren and his heart as hard,
Is he whose head conceived, whose hand prepared,
Aught to displace Athena's poor remains :
Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains,
And never knew, till then, the weight of Despot's chains.

XIII.

What! shall it e'er be said by British tongue,
Albion was happy in Athena's tears?
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom wrung,
Tell not the deed to blushing Europe's ears;
The Ocean queen, the free Britannia bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding land ;
Yes, she, whose gen'rous aid her name endears,
Tore down those remnants with a Harpy's hand,
Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand.

XIV.

Where was thine Ægis, Pallas! that appalled
Stern Alaric and Havoc on their way?
Where Peleus' son? whom Hell in vain enthralled,
His shade from Hades upon that dread day,
Bursting to light in terrible array!
What! could not Pluto spare the chief once more,
To scare a second robber from his prey?
Idly he wandered on the Stygian shore,
Nor now preserved the walls he loved to shield before.

XV.

Cold is the heart, fair Greece! that looks on thee,
Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they loved;
Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defaced, thy mouldering shrines removed
By British hands, which it had best behaved
To guard those relics ne'er to be restored.
Curst be the hour when from their isle they roved,
And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
And snatched thy shrinking Gods to northern climes abroad.

XVI.

But where is Harold? shall I then forget
To urge the gloomy wanderer o'er the wave?
Little recked he of all that men regret;
No loved-one now in feigned lament could rave;
No friend the parting hand extended gave;
Ere the cold stranger passed to other climes:
Hard is his heart whom charms may not enslave;
But Harold felt not as in other times,
And left without a sigh the land of war and crimes.

XVII.

He that has sailed upon the dark blue sea,
Has viewed at times, I ween, a full fair sight;
When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,
The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight;
Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the right,
The glorious main expanding o'er the bow,
The convoy spread like wild swans in their flight,
The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,
So gaily curl the waves before each dashing prow.

XVIII.

And oh! the little warlike world within!
 The well-reeved guns, the netted canopy,
 The hoarse command, the busy humming din,
 When, at a word, the tops are manned on high:
 Hark to the boatswain's call, the cheering cry!
 While through the seaman's hand the tackle glides;
 Or school-boy midshipman that, standing by,
 Strains his shrill pipe as good or ill betides,
 And well the docile crew that skilful urchin guides.

XIX.

White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
 Where on the watch the staid lieutenant walks:
 Look on that part which sacred doth remain
 For the lone chieftain, who majestic stalks,
 Silent and feared by all—not oft he talks
 With aught beneath him, if he would preserve
 That strict restraint, which broken, ever balks
 Conquest and fame: but Britons rarely swerve
 From law, however stern, which tends their strength to nerve.

XX.

Blow! swiftly blow, thou keel-compelling gale!
 Till the broad sun withdraws his lessening ray;
 Then must the pennant-bearer slacken sail,
 That lagging barks may make their lazy way.
 Ah! grievance sore, and listless dull delay,
 To waste on sluggish hulks the sweetest breeze!
 What leagues are lost before the dawn of day,
 Thus loitering pensive on the willing seas,
 The flapping sail hauled down to halt for logs like these!

* * *

XXI.

The moon is up; by Heaven, a lovely eve!
Long streams of light o'er dancing waves expand;
Now lads on shore may sigh, and maids believe:
Such be our fate when we return to land!
Meantime some rude Arion's restless hand
Wakes the brisk harmony that sailors love;
A circle there of merry listeners stand,
Or to some well-known measure featly move,
Thoughtless, as if on shore they still were free to rove.

XXII.

Through Calpe's straits survey the steepy shore;
Europe and Afric on each other gaze!
Lands of the dark-eyed Maid and dusky Moor
Alike beheld beneath pale Hecate's blaze:
How softly on the Spanish shore she plays,
Disclosing rock, and slope, and forest brown,
Distinct, though darkening with her waning phase;
But Mauritania's giant-shadows frown,
From mountain-cliff to coast descending sombre down.

XXIII.

'Tis night, when meditation bids us feel
We once have loved, though love is at an end:
The heart, lone mourner of its baffled zeal,
Though friendless now, will dream it had a friend.
Who with the weight of years would wish to bend,
When Youth itself survives young Love and Joy?
Alas! when mingling souls forget to blend,
Death hath but little left him to destroy!
Ah! happy years! once more who would not be a boy?

XXIV.

Thus bending o'er the vessel's laving side,
To gaze on Dian's wave-reflected sphere,
The soul forgets her schemes of hope and pride,
And flies unconscious o'er each backward year.
None are so desolate but something dear,
Dearer than self, possesses or possessed
A thought, and claims the homage of a tear;
A flashing pang! of which the weary breast
Would still, albeit in vain, the heavy heart divest.

XXV.

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er, or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unrolled.

XXVI.

But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;
Minions of splendour shrinking from distress!
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less
Of all that flattered, followed, sought and sued;
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

XXVII.

More blest the life of godly eremite,
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen,
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so serene,
That he who there at such an hour hath been,
Will wistful linger on that hallowed spot ;
Then slowly tear him from the 'witching scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot.

XXVIII.

Pass we the long, unvarying course, the track
Oft trod, that never leaves a trace behind ;
Pass we the calm, the gale, the change, the tack ,
And each well known caprice of wave and wind ;
Pass we the joys and sorrows sailors find,
Cooped in their winged sea-girt citadel ;
The foul, the fair, the contrary, the kind,
As breezes rise and fall, and billows swell,
Till on some jocund morn—lo, land! and all is well.

XXIX.

But not in silence pass Calypso's isles,
The sister tenants of the middle deep ;
There for the weary still a haven smiles,
Though the fair goddess long hath ceased to weep,
And o'er her cliffs a fruitless watch to keep.
For him who dared prefer a mortal bride :
Here, too, his boy essayed the dreadful leap
Stern Mentor urged from high to yonder tide ;
While thus of both bereft, the nymph-queen doubly sighs

XXX.

Her reign is past, her gentle glories gone.
But trust not this; too easy youth, beware!
A mortal sovereign holds her dangerous throne,
And thou may'st find a new Calypso there.
Sweet Florence! could another ever share
This wayward, loveless heart, it would be thine:
But checked by every tie, I may not dare
To cast a worthless offering at thy shrine,
Nor ask so dear a breast to feel one pang for mine.

XXXI.

Thus Harold deemed, as on that lady's eye
He looked, and met its beam without a thought,
Save admiration glancing harmless by:
Love kept aloof, albeit not far remote,
Who knew his votary often lost and caught,
But knew him as his worshipper no more,
And ne'er again the boy his bosom sought:
Since now he vainly urged him to adore,
Well deemed the little God his ancient sway was o'er.

XXXII.

Fair Florence found, in sooth with some amaze,
One who, 'twas said, still sighed to all he saw,
Withstand, unmoved, the lustre of her gaze,
Which others hailed with real, or mimic awe,
Their hope, their doom, their punishment, their law;
All that gay beauty from her bondsmen claims:
And much she marvelled that a youth so raw
Nor felt, nor feigned at least, the oft-told flames,
Which, though sometimes they frown, yet rarely anger dames.

XXXIII.

Little knew she that seeming marble-heart,
Now masked in silence or withheld by pride,
Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art,
And spread its snares licentious far and wide;
Nor from the base pursuit had turned aside,
As long as aught was worthy to pursue :
But Harold on such arts no more relied;
And had he doated on those eyes so blue,
Yet never would he join the lover's whining crew.

XXXIV.

Not much he kens, I ween, of woman's breast,
Who thinks that wanton thing is won by sighs;
What careth she for hearts when once possessed?
Do proper homage to thine idol's eyes,
But not too humbly, or she will despise
Thee and thy suit, though told in moving tropes
Disguise ev'n tenderness, if thou art wise;
Brisk confidence still best with woman copes;
Pique her and soothe in turn, soon passion crowns thy

XXXV.

'Tis an old lesson; time approves it true,
And those who know it best, deplore it most;
When all is won that all desire to woo,
The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost :
Youth wasted, minds degraded, honour lost,
These are thy fruits, successful passion! these!
If kindly cruel, early hope is crost,
Still to the last it rankles, a disease,
Not to be cured when Love itself forgets to please.

XXXVI.

Away! nor let me loiter in my song,
For we have many a mountain-path to tread,
And many a varied shore to sail along,
By pensive sadness, not by fiction, led—
Climes, fair withal as ever mortal head
Imagined in its little schemes of thought;
Or e'er in new Utopias were ared,
To teach man what he might be, or he ought;
If that corrupted thing could ever such be taught.

XXXVII.

Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,
Though always changing, in her aspect mild;
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-weaned, though not her favoured child.
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polished dares pollute her path:
To me by day or night she ever smiled,
Though I have marked her when none other hath,
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.

XXXVIII.

Land of Albania! where Iskander rose,
Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,
And he his name-sake, whose oft-battled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprise:
Land of Albania! let me bend mine eyes
On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage men!
The cross descends, thy minarets arise,
And the pale crescent sparkles in the glen,
Through many a cypress grove within each city's ken.

XXXIX.

Childe Harold sailed, and passed the barren spot,
Where: sad Penelope o'erlooked the wave;
And onward viewed the mount, not yet forgot,
The lover's refuge, and the Lesbian's grave.
Dark Sappho! could not verse immortal save
That breast imbued with such immortal fire?
Could she not live who life eternal gave?
If life eternal may await the lyre,
That only Heaven to which Earth's children may aspire

XL.

'Twas on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve
Childe Harold hailed Leucadia's cape afar;
A spot he longed to see, nor cared to leave:
Oft did he mark the scenes of vanished war,
Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar;
Mark them unmoved, for he would not delight
(Born beneath some remote inglorious star)
In themes of bloody fray, or gallant fight,
But loathed the bravo's trade, and laughed at martial

XLI.

But when he saw the evening star above
Leucadia's far-projecting rock of woe,
And hailed the last resort of fruitless love,
He felt, or deemed he felt, no common glow:
And as the stately vessel glided slow
Beneath the shadow of that ancient mount,
He watched the billows' melancholy flow,
And, sunk albeit in thought as he was wont,
More placid seemed his eye, and smooth his pallid

XLII.

Morn dawns; and with it stern Albania's hills,
 Dark Sulis' rocks, and Pindus' inland peak,
 Robed half in mist bedew'd with snowy rills,
 Arrayed in many a dun and purple streak,
 Arise; and, as the clouds along them break,
 Disclose the dwelling of the mountaineer:
 Here roams the wolf, the eagle whets his beak,
 Birds, beasts of prey, and wilder men appear,
 And gathering storms around convulse the closing year.

XLIII.

Now Harold felt himself at length alone,
 And bade to christian tongues a long adieu;
 Now he adventured on a shore unknown.
 Which all admire, but many dread to view:
 His breast was armed 'gainst fate, his wants were few;
 Peril he sought not, but ne'er shrank to meet;
 The scene was savage, but the scene was new;
 This made the ceaseless toil of travel sweet,
 Beat back keen winter's blast, and welcomed summer's heat.

XLIV.

Here the red cross, for still the cross is here,
 Though sadly scoffed at by the circumcised,
 Forgets that pride to pampered priesthood dear;
 Churchman and votary alike despised.
 Foul Superstition! howsoe'er disguised,
 Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent, cross,
 For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
 Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss!

Who from true worship's gold can separate thy dross?

XLV.

Ambracia's gulph behold, where once was lost
 A world for woman, lovely, harmless thing !
 In yonder rippling bay, their naval host
 Did many a Roman chief and Asian king
 To doubtful conflict, certain slaughter bring :
 Look where the second Cæsar's trophies rose !
 Now, like the hands that reared them, withering :
 Imperial anarchs, doubling human woes !
 God ! was thy globe ordained for such to win and lose

XLVI.

From the dark barriers of that rugged clime,
 Ev'n to the centre of Illyria's vales,
 Childe Harold passed o'er many a mount sublime,
 Through lands scarce noticed in historic tales ;
 Yet in famed Attica such lovely dæles
 Are rarely seen ; nor can fair Tempe boast
 A charm they know not ; loved Parnassus fails,
 Though classic ground and consecrated most,
 To match some spots that lurk within this lowering coast

XLVII.

He passed bleak Pindus, Acherusia's lake,
 And left the primal city of the land,
 And onwards did his further journey take
 To greet Albania's chief, whose dread command
 Is lawless law ; for with a bloody hand
 He sways a nation turbulent and bold :
 Yet here and there some daring mountain-band
 Disdain his power, and from their rocky hold
 Hurl their defiance far, nor yield, unless to gold.

XLVIII.

Monastic Zitzä! from thy shady brow,
Thou small, but favoured spot of holy ground!
Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found!
Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound,
And bluest skies that harmonize the whole:
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing sound
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please the soul.

XLIX.

Amidst the grove that crowns yon tufted hill,
Which, were it not for many a mountain nigh
Rising in lofty ranks, and loftier still,
Might well itself be deemed of dignity,
The convent's white walls glisten fair on high:
Here dwells the caloyer, nor rude is he,
Nor niggard of his cheer; the passer by
Is welcome still; nor heedless will he flee
From hence, if he delight kind Nature's sheen to see.

L.

Here in the sultriest season let him rest,
Fresh in the green beneath those aged trees;
Here winds of gentlest wing will fan his breast,
From heaven itself he may inhale the breeze:
The plain is far beneath—oh! let him seize
Pure pleasure while he can; the scorching ray
Here pierceth not, impregnate with disease:
Then let his length the loitering pilgrim lay,
And gaze, untired, the morn, the noon, the eve away.

LI.

Dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight,
 Nature's volcanic amphitheatre,
 Chimæra's alps extend from left to right :
 Beneath, a living valley seems to stir ;
 Flocks play, trees wave, streams flow, the mounta
 Nodding above : behold black Acheron !
 Once consecrated to the sepulchre.
 Pluto ! if this be hell I look upon,
 Close shamed Elysium's gates, my shade shall seek for r

LII.

Ne city's towers pollute the lovely view ;
 Unseen is Yanina, though not remote,
 Veiled by the screen of hills : here men are few,
 Scanty the hamlet, rare the lonely cot ;
 But, peering down each precipice, the goat
 Browseth ; and, pensive o'er his scattered flock,
 The little shepherd in his white capote
 Doth lean his boyish form along the rock,
 Or in his cave awaits the tempest's short-lived shoc

LIII.

Oh ! where, Dodona ! is thine aged grove,
 Prophetic fount, and oracle divine ?
 What valley echoed the response of Jove ?
 What trace remaineth of the thunderer's shrine ?
 All, all forgotten—and shall man repine
 That his frail bonds to fleeting life are broke ?
 Cease, fool ! the fate of gods may well be thine :
 Would'st thou survive the marble or the oak ?
 When nations, tongues, and worlds must sink beneath

LIV.

Epirus' bounds recede, and mountains fail;
Tired of up-gazing still, the wearied eye
Reposes gladly on as smooth a vale
As ever spring ycladin grassy dye :
Ev'n on a plain no humble beauties lie,
Where some bold river breaks the long expanse,
And woods along the banks are waving high,
Whose shadows in the glassy waters dance,
Or with the moon-beam sleep in midnight's solemn trance.

LV.

The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit,
And Laos wide and fierce came roaring by;
The shades of wonted night were gathering yet,
When, down the steep banks winding warily,
Childe Harold saw, like meteors in the sky,
The glittering minarets of Tepalen,
Whose walls o'erlook the stream ; and drawing nigh,
He heard the busy hum of warrior-men
Swelling the breeze that sighed along the lengthening glen.

LVI.

He passed the sacred Haram's silent tower,
And underneath the wide o'erarching gate
Surveyed the dwelling of this chief of power,
Where all around proclaimed his high estate.
Amidst no common pomp the despot sate,
While busy preparation shook the court,
Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and santons wait ;
Within, a palace, and without, a fort :
Here men of every clime appear to make resort.

LVII.

Richly caparisoned, a ready row
 Of armed horse, and many a warlike store
 Circled the wide extending court below :
 Above, strange groups adorned the corridore ;
 And oft-times through the area's echoing door
 Some high-capped Tartar spurred his steed away :
 The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor,
 Here mingled in their many-hued array,
 While the deep war-drum's sound announced the close of

LVIII.

The wild Albanian kirtled to his knee,
 With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun,
 And gold-embroidered garments, fair to see ;
 The crimson-scarfed men of Macedon ;
 The Delhi with his cap of terror on,
 And crooked glaive ; the lively, supple Greek ;
 And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son ;
 The bearded Turk that rarely deigns to speak,
 Master of all around, too potent to be meek,

LIX.

Are mixed conspicuous : some recline in groups,
 Scanning the motley scene that varies round ;
 There some grave Moslem to devotion stoops,
 And some that smoke, and some that play, are found
 Here the Albanian proudly treads the ground ;
 Half whispering there the Greek is heard to prate ;
 Hark ! from the mosque the nightly solemn sound,
 The Muezzin's call doth shake the minaret,
 " There is no god but God !—to prayer—lo ! God is great ! "

LX.

Just at this season Ramazani's fast
Through the long day its penance did maintain :
But when the lingering twilight hour was past,
Revel and feast assumed the rule again :
Now all was bustle, and the menial train
Prepared and spread the plenteous board within ;
The vacant gallery now seemed made in vain,
But from the chambers came the mingling din,
As page and slave anon were passing out and in.

LXI.

Here woman's voice is never heard : apart,
And scarce permitted, guarded, veiled, to move,
She yields to one her person and her heart,
Tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to rove :
For, not unhappy in her master's love,
And joyful in a mother's gentlest cares,
Blest cares ! all other feelings far above !
Herself more sweetly rears the babe she bears,
Who never quits the breast, no meaner passion shares.

LXII.

In marble-paved pavilion, where a spring
Of living water from the centre rose,
Whose bubbling did a genial freshness fling,
And soft voluptuous couches breathed repose,
ALI reclined, a man of war and woes ;
Yet in his lineaments ye cannot trace,
While gentleness her milder radiance throws
Along that aged venerable face,
The deeds that lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace.

LXIII.

It is not that yon hoary lengthening beard
Ill suits the passions which belong to youth ;
Love conquers age—so Hafiz hath averred ,
So sings the Teian, and he sings in sooth—
But crimes that scorn the tender voice of Ruth,
Beseeming all men ill, bust most the man
In years, have marked him with a tyger's tooth ;
Blood follows blood, and, through their mortal sp
In bloodier acts conclude those who with blood beg

LXIV.

'Mid many things most new to ear and eye
The pilgrim rested here his weary feet,
And gazed around on Moslem luxury,
Till quickly wearied with that spacious seat
Of wealth and wantonness, the choice retreat
Of sated grandeur from the city's noise :
And were it humbler, it in sooth were sweet ;
But peace abhorreth artificial joys,
And pleasure, leagued with pomp, the zest of both dest

LXV.

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
Where is the foe that ever saw their back ?
Who can so well the toil of war endure ?
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need :
Their wrath how deadly ! but their friendship sure
When gratitude or valour bids them bleed,
Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead.

LXVI.

Childe Harold saw them in their chieftain's tower
Thronging to war in splendour and success,
And after viewed them, when, within their power,
Himself awhile the victim of distress ;
That saddening hour when bad men hotlier press :
But these did shelter him beneath their roof,
When less barbarians would have cheered him less,
And fellow-countrymen have stood aloof—
In aught that tries the heart how few withstand the proof!

LXVII.

It chanced that adverse winds once drove his bark,
Full on the coast of Sulis' shaggy shore,
When all around was desolate and dark ;
To land was perilous, to sojourn more ;
Yet for awhile the mariners forbore,
Dubious to trust where treachery might lurk :
At length they ventured forth, though doubting sore
That those who loathe alike the Frank and Turk
Might once again renew their ancient butcher-work.

LXVIII.

Vain fear! the Suliotes stretched the welcome hand,
Led them o'er rocks and past the dangerous swamp,
Kinder than polished slaves, though not so bland,
And piled the hearth, and wrung their garments damp,
And filled the bowl, and trimmed the cheerful lamp,
And spread their fare ; though homely, all they had :
Such conduct bears philanthropy's rare stamp—
To rest the weary and to soothe the sad,
Doth lesson happier men, and shames at least the bad.

LXIX.

It came to pass, that when he did address
Himself to quit at length this mountain-land,
Combined marauders half-way barred egress,
And wasted far and near with glaive and brand;
And therefore did he take a trusty band
To traverse Acarnania's forest wide,
In war well seasoned, and with labours tanned,
Till he did greet white Achelous' tide,
And from his further bank Ætolia's wolds espied.

LXX.

Where lone Utraiky forms its circling cove,
And weary waves retire to gleam at rest,
How brown the foliage of the green hill's grove,
Nodding at midnight o'er the calm bay's breast,
As winds come lightly whispering from the west,
Kissing, not ruffling, the blue deep's serene.—
Here Harold was received a welcome guest,
Nor did he pass unmoved the gentle scene,
For many a joy could he from Night's soft presence glean.

LXXI.

On the smooth shore the night-fires brightly blazed,
The feast was done, the red wine circling fast,
And he that unawares had there ygazed
With gaping wonderment had stared aghast;
For ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past
The native revels of the troop began;
Each Palikar his sabre from him cast,
And bounding hand in hand, man linked to man,
Yelling their uncouth dirge, long daunced the kirtled clan.

LXXII.

Childe Harold at a little distance stood,
 And viewed, but not displeased, the revelrie,
 Nor hated harmless mirth however rude :
 In sooth, it was no vulgar sight to see
 Their barbarous, yet their not indecent, glee,
 And, as the flames along their faces gleamed,
 Their gestures nimble, dark eyes flashing free,
 The long wild locks that to their girdles streamed,
 While thus in concert they this lay half sang, half screamed :

1.

* TAMBOURGI ! Tambourgi ! (1) thy 'larum afar
 Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war ;
 All the sons of the mountains arise at the note,
 Chimariot, Illyrian, and dark Suliote !

2.

Oh ! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
 In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote ?
 To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,
 And descends to the plain like the stream from the rock.

3.

Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive
 The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live ?
 Let those guns so unerring such vengeance forego
 What mark is so fair as the breast of a foe ?

(1) Drummer.

4.

Macedonia sends forth her invincible race;
For a time they abandon the cave and the chase :
But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder, before
The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

5.

Then the pirates of Parga that dwell by the waves,
And teach the pale Franks what it is to be slaves,
Shall leave on the beach the long galley and oar,
And track to his covert the captive on shore.

6.

I ask not the pleasures that riches supply,
My sabre shall win what the feeble must buy ;
Shall win the young bride with her long flowing hair,
And many a maid from her mother shall tear.

7.

I love the fair face of the maid in her youth,
Her caresses shall lull me, her music shall sooth ;
Let her bring from the chamber her many-toned lyre,
And sing us a song on the fall of her sire.

8.

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,
The shrieks of the conquered, the conqueror's yell ;
The roofs that we fired, and the plunder we shared,
The wealthy we slaughtered, the lovely we spared.

9.

I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear ;
He neither must know who would serve the Vizier :
Since the days of our prophet the Crescent ne'er saw
A chief ever glorious like Ali Pashaw.

10.

Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped,
 Let the yellow-haired (1) Giaours (2) view his horse-tail (3)
 with dread;
 When his Delhis (4) come dashing in blood o'er the banks,
 How few shall escape from the Muscovite ranks!

11.

Selictar! (5) unsheath then our chief's scimitar:
 Tambourgi! thy 'larum gives promise of war.
 Ye mountains, that see us descend to the shore,
 Shall view us as victors, or view us no more!

LXXIII.

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
 Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!
 Who now shall lead thy scattered children forth,
 And long accustomed bondage uncreate?
 Not such thy sons who whilome did await,
 The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
 In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait—
 Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
 Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the tomb?

(1) Yellow is the epithet given to the Russians.

(2) Infidel.

(3) Horse-tails are the insignia of a Pacha.

(4) Horsemen, answering to our forlorn hope.

(5) Sword-bearer.

LXXIV.

Spirit of freedom ! when on Phyle's brow
 Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
 Could'st thou forebode the disunal hour which now
 Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain ?
 Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
 But every carle can lord it o'er thy land ;
 Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
 Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand
 From birth till death enslaved ; in word, in deed

LXXV.

In all save form alone, how changed ! and who
 That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
 Who but would deem their bosoms burned anew
 With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty !
 And many dream withal the hour is nigh
 That gives them back their fathers' heritage :
 For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
 Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
 Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful

LXXVI.

Hereditary bondsmen ! know ye not
 Who would be free themselves must strike the blow
 By their right arms the conquest must be wrought
 Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye ? no !
 True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
 But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.
 Shades of the Helots ! triumph o'er your foe !
 Greece ! change thy lords, thy state is still the same
 Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thine years of shame

LXXVII.

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Othman's race again may wrest;
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former guest;
Or Wahab's rebel brood who dared divest
The prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,
May wind their path of blood along the West;
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

LXXVIII.

Yet mark their mirth—ere lenten days begin,
That penance which their holy rites prepare
To shrieve from man his weight of mortal sin,
By daily abstinence and nightly prayer;
But ere his sackcloth garb Repentance wear,
Some days of joyaunce are decreed to all,
To take of pleasaunce each his secret share,
In motley robe to dance at masking ball,
And join the mimic train of merry Carnival.

LXXIX.

And whose more rife with merriment than thine,
O Stamboul! once the empress of their reign?
Though turbans now pollute Sophia's shrine,
And Greece her very altars eyes in vain:
(Alas! her woes will still pervade my strain!)
Gay were her minstrels once, for free her throng,
All felt the common joy they now must feign,
Nor oft I've seen such sight, nor heard such song,
As wooed the eye and thrilled the Bosphorus along.

LXXX.

Loud was the lightsome tumult of the shore,
Oft Music changed, but never ceased her tone,
And timely echoed back the measured oar,
And rippling waters made a pleasant moan :
The Queen of tides on high consenting shone,
And when a transient breeze swept o'er the wave,
'Twas, as if darting from her heavenly throne,
A brighter glance her form reflected gave,
Till sparkling billows seemed to light the banks they lave

LXXXI.

Glanced many a light caique along the foam,
Danced on the shore the daughters of the land,
Ne thought had man or maid of rest or home,
While many a languid eye and thrilling hand
Exchanged the look few bosoms may withstand,
Or gently prest, returned the pressure still :
O Love ! young Love ! bound in thy rosy band,
Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem life's years of ill !

LXXXII.

But, midst the throng in merry masquerade,
Lurk there no hearts that throb with secret pain,
Ever through the closest searment half betrayed?
To such the gentle murmurs of the main
Seem to re-echo all they mourn in vain ;
To such the gladness of the gamesome crowd
Is source of wayward thought and stern disdain :
How do they loathe the laughter idly loud,
And long to change the robe of revel for the shroud !

LXXXIII.

This must he feel, the true-born son of Greece,
 If Greece one true-born patriot still can boast :
 Not such as prate of war, but skulk in peace,
 The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all he lost,
 Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can accost,
 And wield the slavish sickle, not the sword :
 Ah! Greece? they love thee least who owe thee most;
 Their birth, their blood, and that sublime record
 Of hero sires, who shame thy now degenerate horde!

LXXXIV.

When riseth Lacedemon's hardihood,
 When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,
 When Athens' children are with hearts endued,
 When Grecian mothers shall give birth to men,
 Then may'st thou be restored; but not till then,
 A thousand years scarce serve to form a state;
 An hour may lay it in the dust: and when
 Can man its shattered splendour renovate,
 Recal its virtues back, and vanquish Time and Fate?

LXXXV.

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
 Land of lost gods and godlike men! art thou!
 Thy vales of ever-green, thy hills of snow
 Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite now:
 Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,
 Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
 Broke by the share of every rustic plough:
 So perish monuments of mortal birth,
 So perish all in turn, save well-recorded Worth;

LXXXVI.

Save where some solitary column mourns
 Above its prostrate brethren of the cave ;
 Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
 Colonna's cliff and gleams along the wave
 Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,
 Where the grey stones and unmolested grass
 Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave,
 While strangers only not regardless pass,
 Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh « Alas! »

LXXXVII.

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild ;
 Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,
 Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
 And still his honied wealth Hymettus yields;
 There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
 The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-air;
 Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,
 Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare ;
 Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

LXXXVIII.

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground ;
 No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
 But one vast realm of wonder spreads arounds,
 And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
 Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
 The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon :
 Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
 Defies the power which crushed thy temples gone :
 Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon,

LXXXIX.

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same
Unchanged in all except its foreign lord—
Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame
The battle-field, where Persia's victim horde
First bowed beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,
As on the morn to distant Glory dear,
When Marathon became a magic word;
Which uttered, to the hearer's eye appear
The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career.

XC.

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow;
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below;
Death in the front, Destruction in the rear!
Such was the scene—what now remaineth here?
What sacred trophy marks the hallowed ground,
Recording Freedom's smile and Asia's tear?
The rifled urn, the violated mound,
The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger! spurns around.

XCI.

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past
Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng;
Long shall the voyager, with th'Ionian blast,
Hail the bright clime of battle and of song;
Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore;
Boast of the aged! lesson of the young!
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the Muse unveil their awful lore.

XCII.

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,
 If aught that's kindred cheer the welcome hearth;
 He that is lonely hither let him roam,
 And gaze complacent on congenial earth.
 Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth;
 But he whom sadness sootheth may abide,
 And scarce regret the region of his birth,
 When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side,
 Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died.

XCIII.

Let such approach this consecrated land,
 And pass in peace along the magic waste :
 But spare its relics—let no busy hand
 Deface the scenes, already how defaced !
 Not for such purpose were these altars placed :
 Revere the remnants nations once revered :
 So may our country's name be undisgraced,
 So may'st thou prosper where thy youth was reared,
 By every honest joy of love and life endeared !

XCIV.

For thee, who thus in too protracted song
 Hast soothed thine idlesse with inglorious lays,
 Soon shall thy voice be lost amid the throng
 Of louder minstrels in these later days :
 To such resign the strife for fading bays—
 Ill may such contest now the spirit move
 Which heeds nor keen reproach nor partial praise ;
 Since cold each kinder heart that might approve,
 And none are left to please when none are left to love.

XCV.

Thou too art gone, thou loved and lovely one!
Whom youth and youth's affection bound to me;
Who did for me what none beside have done,
Nor shrank from one albeit unworthy thee.
What is my being? thou hast ceased to be!
Nor staid to welcome here thy wanderer home,
Who mourns o'er hours which we no more shall see—
Would they had never been, or were to come!
Would he had ne'er returned to find fresh cause to roam!

XCVI.

Oh! ever loving, lovely, and beloved!
How selfish sorrow ponders on the past,
And clings to thoughts now better far removed!
But Time shall tear thy shadow from me last.
All thou could'st have of mine, stern Death! thou hast;
The parent, friend, and now the more than friend:
Ne'er yet for one thine arrows flew so fast,
And grief with grief continuing still to blend,
Hath snatched the little joy that life had yet to lend.

XCVII.

Then must I plunge again into the crowd,
And follow all that Peace disdains to seek?
Where Revel calls, and Laughter, vainly loud,
False to the heart, distorts the hollow cheek,
To leave the flagging spirit doubly weak;
Still o'er the features, which perforce they cheer
To feign the pleasure or conceal the pique;
Smiles form the channel of a future tear,
Or raise the writhing lip with ill-dissembled sneer.

XCVIII.

What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
And be alone on earth, as I am now.
Before the Chastener humbly let me bow,
O'er hearts divided and o'er hopes destroyed :
Roll on, vain days! full reckless may ye flow,
Since time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoyed,
And with the ills of Eld mine earlier years alloyed.

END OF CANTO II.

CHILDE HAROLD'S

PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO III.

I.

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!
Ada! sole daughter of my house and heart!
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
And then we parted,—not as now we part,
But with a hope.—

Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me; and on high
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by,
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

II.

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome, to their roar!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam, to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

III.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;
Again I seize the theme then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

IV.

Since my young days of passion—joy, or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
And both may jar: it may be, that in vain
I would essay as I have sung to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling
Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

V.

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,
So that no wonder waits him; nor below
Can love, or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rise
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpair'd, though old, in the soul's haunted cell.

VI.

'Tis to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now.
What am I? Nothing; but not so art thou,
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crush'd feelings' dearth.

VII.

Yet must I think less wildly: I *have* thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd. 'Tis too late!
Yet am I chang'd; though still enough the same
In strength to bear what time can not abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.

VIII.

Something too much of this:—but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal.
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last;
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er heal;
Yet Time, who changes all, had altered him
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

IX.

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he found
The dregs were wormwood ; but he fill'd again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deem'd its spring perpetual ; but in vain !
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though unseen,
And heavy though it clank'd not ; worn with pain,
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
Entering with every step, he took, through many a scene.

X.

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deem'd his spirit now so firmly fix'd,
And sheath'd with an invulnerable mind,
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind ;
And he, as one, might midst the many stand
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to find
Fit speculation ! such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and Nature's hand.

XI.

But who can view the ripened rose, nor seek
To wear it ? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old ?
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds unfold
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb !
Harold, once more within the vortex, roll'd
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.

XII.

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
 Of men to herd with Man; with whom he held
 Little in common; untaught to submit
 His thoughts to others, though his soul was quell'd
 In youth by his own thoughts; still uncompell'd,
 He would not yield dominion of his mind
 To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;
 Proud though in desolation; which could find
 A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.

XIII.

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
 Where roll'd the Ocean, thereon was his home;
 Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
 He had the passion and the power to roam;
 The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
 Were unto him companionship; they spake
 A mutual language, clearer than the tome
 Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
 For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

XIV.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
 Till he had peopled them with beings bright
 As their own beams; and earth; and earth-born jars,
 And human frailties, were forgotten quite:
 Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
 He had been happy; but this clay will sink
 Its spark immortal, envying it the light
 To which it mounts, as if to break the link
 That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.

XXI.

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And ' all went merry as a marriage-bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

XXII.

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet—
But, hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

XXIII.

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

XXIV.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon nights so sweet such awful morn could rise?

XXV.

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
-Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! They come!
they come!"

XXVI.

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Eyan's³, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

XXVII.

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
 Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
 Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
 Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
 In its next verdure, when the fiery mass
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

XXVIII.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
 Battle's magnificently—stern array!
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
 The earth is covered thick with other clay,
 Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
 Rider and horse,—friend; foe,—in one red burial blent!

XXIX.

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine;
 Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
 Partly because they blend me with his line,
 And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
 And partly that bright names will hallow song;
 And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd
 The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,
 Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd,
 They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young, gallant
 Howard!

XXX.

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing, had I such to give ;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wild field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not bring.

XXXI.

I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake ;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for ; though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honoured but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

XXXII.

They, mourn, but smile at length ; and smiling, mourn :
The tree will wither long before it fall ;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn ;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
In massy hoariness ; the ruined wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone ;
The bars survive the captive they enthrall ;
The day drags through though storms keep out the sun ;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on :

XXXIII.

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
 In every fragment multiplies ; and makes
 A thousand images of one that was,
 The same, and still the more, the more it breaks ;
 And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
 Living in shattered guise, and still, and cold,
 And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
 Yet withers on till all without is old,
 Shewing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

XXXIV.

There is a very life in our despair,
 Vitality of poison, — a quick root
 Which feeds these deadly branches ; for it were
 As nothing did we die ; but Life will suit,
 Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
 Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
 All ashes to the taste : Did man compute
 Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
 Such hours' gainst years of life,—say, would he na
 three-score ?

XXXV.

The Psalmist numbered out the years of man :
 They are enough ; and if thy tale be *true*,
 Thou, who didst grudge him even that fleeting span
 More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo !
 Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
 Their children's lips shall echo them, and say—
 « Here, where the sword united nations drew,
 « Our countrymen were warring on that day ! »
 And this is much, and all which will not pass away.

XXXVI.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men.
Whose spirit antithetically mixt
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixt,
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt,
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;
For daring made thy rise as fall : thou seek'st
Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the thunderer of the scene!

XXXVII.

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou!
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,
Who wooed thee once, thy vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

XXXVIII.

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field;
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;
An empire thou could'st crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star.

XXXIX.

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide
 With that untaught innate philosophy,
 Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,
 Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
 When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
 To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
 With a sedate and all-enduring eye;—
 When Fortune fled her spoil'd and favourite child,
 He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him piled.

XL.

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
 Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show
 That just habitual scorn which could contemn
 Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to feel, not so
 To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
 And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
 Till they were turn'd unto thine overthrow :
 'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;
 So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

XLI.

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock,
 Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,
 Such scorn of man had help'd to brave the shock;
 But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy thro
 Their admiration thy best weapon shone;
 The part of Philip's son was thine, not then
 (Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)
 Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
 For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

XLH.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

XLIII.

This makes the madmen who have made men mad
By their contagion; Conquerors and Kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things,
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;
Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs? One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule:

XLIV.

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nurs'd and bigotted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid by
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

XLV.

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find,
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow ;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and Ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

XLVI.

Away with these! true Wisdom's world will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties ; streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells.

XLVII.

And there they stand, as stands a lofty mind,
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying wind,
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.
There was a day when they were young and proud,
Banners on high, and battles pass'd below ;
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow.

XLVIII.

Beneath these battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud state
Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
What want these outlaws conquerors should have?
But History's purchased page to call them great?
A wider space, an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full as brave.

XLIX.

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
And Love, which lent a blazon to their shields,
With emblems well devised by amorous pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief won,
Saw the discoloured Rhine beneath its ruin run.

L.

But Thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever
Could man but leave thy bright creation so,
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict,—then to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem such to me
Even now what wants thy stream?—that it should let he be.

LI.

A thousand battles have assail'd thy banks,
But these and half their fame have pass'd away,
And Slaughter heap'd on high his weltering ranks;
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glass'd with its dancing light the sunny ray;
But o'er the blackened memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem

LII.

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along,
Yet not insensibly to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even exile dear:
Though on his brow were graven lines austere,
And tranquil sternness which had ta'en the place
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with transient trace

LIII.

Nor was all love shut from him, though his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to dust.
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze,
On such as smile upon us; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though disgust
Hath wean'd it from all worldlings: thus he felt,
For there was soft remembrance, and sweet trust
In one fond breast, to which his own would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom dwelt.

LIV.

And he had learn'd to love,—I know not why,
 For this in such as him seems strange of mood,—
 The helpless looks of blooming infancy,
 Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,
 To change like this, a mind so far imbued
 With scorn of man, it little boots to know;
 But thus it was; and though in solitude
 Small power the nipp'd affections have to grow,
 In him this glowed when all beside had ceased to glow.

LV.

And there was one soft breast, as hath been said,
 Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
 Than the church links withal; and, though unwed,
That love was pure, and, far above disguise,
 Had stood the test of mortal enmities
 Still undivided, and cemented more
 By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
 But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
 Well to that heart might his these absent greetings pour!

I.

The castled crag of Drachenfels
 Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
 Whose breast of waters broadly swells
 Between the banks which bear the vine,
 And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
 And fields which promise corn and wine,
 And scattered cities crowning these,
 Whose far white walls along them shine,
 Have strewed a scene, which I should see
 With double joy wert *thou* with me!

2.

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise ;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of grey,
And many a rock which steeply lours,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers ;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine !

3.

I send the lilies given to me ;
Though long before thy hand they touch, .
I know that they must withered be,
But yet reject them not as such ;
For I have cherish'd them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye, .
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gathered by the Rhine, .
And offered from my heart to thine !

4.

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round ;
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here ;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine !

LVI.

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,
Our enemy's,—but let not that forbid
Honour to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

LVII.

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career,—
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes;
And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had not o'erstept
The charter to chastise which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.

LVIII.

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shattered wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon the height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light;
A tower of victory! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the plain:
But Peace destroy'd what War could never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to summer's rain—
On which the iron shower for years had pour'd in vain.

LIX.

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine ! How long delighted
The stranger fain would linger on his way !
Thine is a scene alike where souls united
Or lonely contemplation thus might stray ;
And could the ceaseless vultures cease to prey
On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the year.

LX.

Adieu to thee again ! a vain adieu !
There can be no farewell to scene like thine ;
The mind is coloured by thy every hue ;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine !
'Tis with the thankful glance of parting praise ;
More mighty spots may rise—more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories of old days,

LXI.

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between,
The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been
In mockery of man's art ; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though empires near the

LXII.

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.

LXIII.

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
There is a spot should not be pass'd in vain,—
Morat! the proud, the patriot field! where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquered on that plain;
Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tombless host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain,
Themselves their monument;—the Stygian coast
Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd each wandering ghost.

LXIV.

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage vies,
Morat and Marathon twin names shall stand;
They were true Glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely cause
Of vice-entail'd corruption; they no land
Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making kings' rights divine, by some Draconic clause.

LXV.

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild-bewildered gaze
Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness; and there it stands
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Levell'd Aventicum, hath strewed her subject lands.

LXVI.

And there—oh! sweet and sacred be the name!—
Julia—the daughter, the devoted—gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
The life she lived in; but the judge was just,
And then she died on him she could not save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.³

LXVII.

But these are deeds which should not pass away,
And names that must not wither, though the earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved, their death and birth;
The high, the mountain-majesty of worth
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,
And from its immortality look forth
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

LXVIII.

Lake Leman woos me with its crystal face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains view
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue :
There is too much of man here, to look through
With a fit mind the might which I behold ;
But soon in me shall loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd than of old,
Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd me in their fold.

LXIX.

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind;
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng, where we become the spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong
Midst a contentious world, striving where none are strong.

LXX.

There, in a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul, turn all our blood to tears,
And colour things to come with hues of Night ;
The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness : on the sea,
The boldest steer but where their ports invite,
But there are wanderers o'er eternity,
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchored ne'er shall be.

LXXI.

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake;—
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd to inflict or bear

LXXII.

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me,
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture : I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of Ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

LXXIII.

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life :
I look upon the peopled desert past,
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,
To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
Though young, yet waxing vigorous, as the blast
Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being clin

LXXIV.

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
 From what it hates in this degraded form,
 Rest of its carnal life, save what shall be
 Existent happier in the fly and worm,—
 When elements to elements conform,
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not
 Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
 The bodiless thought? the spirit of each spot?
 Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

LXXV.

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
 Of me and of my soul, as I of them?
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart
 With a pure passion? should I not condemn
 All objects, if compared with these? and stem
 A tide of suffering, rather than forego
 Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
 Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,
 Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow?

LXXVI.

But this is not my theme ; and I return
 To that which is immediate, and require
 Those who find contemplation in the urn,
 To look on one, whose dust was once all fire,
 A native of the land where I respire
 The clear air for a while—a passing guest,
 Where he became a being,—whose desire
 Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,
 The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

LXXVII.

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,
The apostle of affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over passion, and from woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
How to make madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts, a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

LXXVIII.

His love was passion's essence—as a tree
On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame
Kindled he was and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamoured, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty, which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distempered though it seems.

LXXIX.

This breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;
This hallowed, too, the memorable kiss
Which every morn his fevered lip would greet,
From hers, who but with friendship his would meet;
But to that gentle touch, through brain and breast
Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring heat;
In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest,
Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possess.

LXXX.

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
Or friends by him self-banish'd; for his mind
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose
For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind,
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.
But he was phrenzied,—wherefore, who may know?
Since cause might be which skill could never find;
But he was phrenzied by disease or woe,
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

LXXXI.

For then he was inspired, and from him came,
As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
Those oracles which set the world in flame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more :
Did he not this for France? which lay before
Bowed to the inborn tyranny of years?
Broken and trembling, to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers,
Roused up to too much wrath which follows o'ergrown fears?

LXXXII.

They made themselves a fearful monument!
The wreck of old opinions—things which grew
Breathed from the birth of time : the veil they rent,
And what behind it lay, all earth shall view.
But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour re-fill'd,
As heretofore, because ambition was self-will'd.

LXXXIII.

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and made it felt.
They might have used it better, but, allured
By their new vigour, sternly have they dealt
On one another; pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But they,
Who in oppression's darkness caved had dwelt,
They were not eagles, nourish'd with the day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey?

LXXXIV.

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
The hearts bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who war
With their own hopes, and have been vanquish'd, bear
Silence, but not submission: in his lair
Fix'd Passion holds his breath, until the hour
Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
It came, it cometh, and will come,—the power
To punish or forgive—in *one* we shall be slower.

LXXXV.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wide world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn Ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

LXXXVI.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more;

LXXXVII.

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes,
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

LXXXVIII.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a stu

LXXXIX.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
 But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep :
 All heaven and earth are still. From the high host
 Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
 All is concentrated in a life intense,
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
 But hath a part of being, and a sense
 Of that which is of all creator and defence.

XC.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
 In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
 A truth, which through our being then doth melt
 And purifies from self : it is a tone,
 The soul and source of music, which makes known
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
 Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm
 The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

XCI.

Not vainly did the early Persian make
 His altar the high places and the peak
 Of earth—o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
 A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
 The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
 Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare
 Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
 With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
 Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

XCII.

The sky is changed!—and such a change! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

XCIII.

And this is in the night :—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

XCIV.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed :—
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

XCV.

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand :
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around : of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
His lightnings,—as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

XCVI.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless,—If I rest.
But where of ye, oh tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

XCVII.

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,—could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word,
And that one word were lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

XCVIII.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contain'd no tomb,—
And glowing into day : we may resume
The march of our existence : and thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Leman ! may find room
And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much, that may give us pause, if pondered fittingly.

XCIX.

Clarens ! sweet Clarens, birth-place of deep love !
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought ;
Thy trees take root in love ; the snows above
The very glaciers have his colours caught,
And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly : the rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of love, who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then mocks.

C.

Clarens ! by heavenly feet thy paths are trod,—
Undying Love's, who here ascends a throne
To which the steps are mountains ; where the god
Is a pervading life and light,—so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest ; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

CI.

All things are here of *him*; from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bowed waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude,

CII.

A populous solitude of bees and birds,
And fairy form'd and many-coloured things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings,
Fearless and full of life : the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,
Mingling, and made by love, unto one mighty end.

CIII.

He who hath loved not, here would learn that love,
And make his heart a spirit; he who knows
That tender mystery, will love the more,
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes,
And the world's waste, have driven him far from those,
For 'tis his nature to advance or die;
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows
Into a boundless blessing which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity !

CIV.

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot,
 Peopling it with affections; but he found
 It was the scene which passion must allot
 To the mind's purified beings; 'twas the ground
 Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound,
 And hallowed it with loveliness: 'tis lone,
 And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,
 And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the Rhone
 Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have rear'd a throne.

CV.

Lansanne! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes³
 Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name;
 Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
 A path to perpetuity of fame:
 They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim,
 Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
 Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the flame
 Of Heaven, again assail'd, if Heaven the while
 On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

CVI.

The one was fire and fickleness, a child,
 Most mutable in wishes, but in mind,
 A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or wild,—
 Historian, bard, philosopher, combined:
 He multiplied himself among mankind,
 The Proteus of their talents: But his own
 Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind,
 Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,—
 Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

CVII.

The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought,
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony,—that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,
And doom'd him to the zealot's ready Hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

CVIII.

Yet, peace be with their ashes!—for by them,
If merited, the penalty is paid;
It is not ours to judge,—far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things shall be made
Known unto all,—or hope and dread allay'd
By slumber, on one pillow,—in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decay'd;
And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'Twill be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

CIX.

But let me quit man's works, again to read
His maker's, spread around me, and suspend
This page, which from my reveries I feed,
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey whate'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region, where
The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

CX.

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages,
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires; still
The fount at which the panting mind assuages
Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

CXI.

Thus far I have proceeded in a theme
Renewed with no kind auspices:—to feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be,—and to steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or angst,—
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief or zeal,—
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul:—No matter,—it is taught.

CXII.

And for these words, thus woven into song,
It may be that they are a harmless wile,—
The colouring of the scenes which fleet along,
Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth,—but I am not
So young as to regard men's frown or smile,
As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;
I stood and stand alone,—remembered or forgot.

CXIII.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me;
 I have not flattered its rank breath, nor bow'd
 To its idolatries a patient knee, —
 Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, — nor cried aloud
 In worship of an echo; in the crowd
 They could not deem me one of such; I stood
 Among them, but not of them; in a shroud
 Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still
 Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

CXIV.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me, —
 But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
 Though I have found them not, that there may be
 Words which are things, — hopes which will not deceive
 And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
 Snares for the failing: I would also deem
 O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve;
 That two, or one, are almost what they seem, —
 That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

CXV.

My daughter! with thy name this song begun —
 My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end —
 I see thee not. — I hear thee not, — but none
 Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend
 To whom the shadows of far years extend:
 Albeit my brow thou never should'st behold,
 My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
 And reach into thy heart, — when mine is cold, —
 A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould.

CXVI.

To aid thy mind's developement,—to watch
Thy dawn of little joys,—to sit and see
Almost thy very growth,—to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to thee!
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss,—
This, it should seem, was not reserv'd for me;
Yet this was in my nature :—as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

CXVII.

Yet, though dull hate as duty should be taught,
I know that thou wilt love me ; though my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still fraught
With desolation,—and a broken claim :
Though the grave closed between us,—'twere the same,
I know that thou wilt love me ; though to drain
My blood from out thy being, were an aim,
And an attainment,—all would be in vain,—
Still thou would'st love me, still that more than life retain.

CXVIII.

The child of love,—though born in bitterness,
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire
These were the elements,—and thine no less.
As yet such are around thee,—but thy fire
Shall be more tempered, and thy hope far higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea,
And from the mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me!

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO IV.

I.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs ; †
A palace and a prison on each hand ;
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, thron'd on her hundred isles

II.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from Ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers :
And such she was ;—her daughters had their dower
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increas'd.

III.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
 And silent rows the songless gondolier ;
 Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
 And music meets not always now the ear :
 Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
 States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
 Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
 The pleasant place of all festivity,
 The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy !

IV.

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
 Her name in story, and her long array
 Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
 Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway ;
 Ours is a trophy which will not decay
 With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,
 And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away—
 The keystones of the arch ! though all were o'er,
 For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

V.

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;
 Essentially immortal, they create
 And multiply in us a brighter ray
 And more beloved existence : that which Fate
 Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
 Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied
 First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;
 Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
 And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

* * *

VI.

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from hope, the last from vacancy ;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye :
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land ; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse :

VII.

I saw or dreamed of such,—but let them go—
They came like truth, and disappeared like dreams ;
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so :
I could replace them if I would, still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found ;
Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
Such over-weening phantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

VIII.

I've taught me other tongues—and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger ; to the mind
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise ;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
A country with—ay, or without mankind ;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,
Not without cause ; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

IX.

Perhaps I loved it well : and should I lay
 My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
 My spirit shall resume it—if we may
 Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
 My hopes of being remembered in my line
 With my land's language : if too fond and far
 These aspirations in their scope incline,—
 If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
 Of hasty growth and blight, and dull oblivion bar

X.

My name from out the temple where the dead
 Are honoured by the nations—let it be—
 And light the laurels on a loftier head !
 And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
 « Sparta hath many a worthier son than he. »
 Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need ;
 The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree
 I planted,—they have torn me,—and I bleed :
 I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.

XI.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord ;
 And, annual marriage now no more renewed,
 The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
 Neglected garment of her widowhood !
 St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
 Stand, but in mockery of his withered power,
 Over the proud place where an emperor sued,
 And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
 When Venice was a queen with an unequalled dower.

XH.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—
 An emperor tramples where an emperor knelt ;
 Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
 Clank over sceptred cities ; nations melt
 From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
 The sunshine for a while, and downward go
 Like lawine loosen'd from the mountain's belt ;
 Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo !
 Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

XIII.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
 Their gilded collars glittering in the sun ;
 But is not Doria's menace come to pass ?
 Are they *not bridled* ?—Venice, lost and won,
 Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
 Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose !
 Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,
 Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
 From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

XIV.

In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre,—
 Her very by-word sprung from victory,
 The « Planter of the Lion, » (1) which through fire
 And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea ;
 Though making many slaves, herself still free,
 And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite ;
 Witness Troy's rival, Candia ! Vouch it, ye
 Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight !
 For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

(1) *Plant the Lion*—that is, the Lion of St. Mark, the standard of the republic, which is the origin of the word Pantaloons—Pianta-leone, Pantaleon, Pantaloons.

XV.

Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file
Of her dead doges are declin'd to dust ;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust ;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger : empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthalls
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

XVI.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse (1),
Her voice their only ransom from afar :
See ! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops; the reins
Fall from his hands—his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

XVII.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants ; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,
Albion ! to thee : the Ocean queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children ; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

(1) The story is told in Plutarch's life of Nicias.

XVIII.

I lov'd her from my boyhood—she to me
 Was as a fairy city of the heart,
 Rising like water-columns from the sea,
 Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
 And Otway, Radcliff, Schiller, Shakspeare's art (1)
 Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,
 Although I found her thus, we did not part,
 Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
 Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

XIX.

I can repeople with the past—and of
 The present there is still for eye and thought,
 And meditation chasten'd down, enough;
 And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;
 And of the happiest moments which were wrought
 Within the web of my existence, some
 From thee, fair Venice! have their colours caught:
 There are some feelings time cannot benumb,
 Nor torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

XX.

But from their nature will the tannen grow
 Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,
 Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
 Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks
 Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
 The howling tempest, till its height and frame
 Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
 Of bleak, grey, granite, into life it came,
 And grew a giant tree;—the mind may grow the same.

(1) Venice Preserved; Mysteries of Udolpho; the Ghost-
 seer, or Armenian; the Merchant of Venice; Othello.

XXI.

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms : mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd
In vain should such example be ; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

XXII.

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd,
Even by the sufferer ; and, in each event,
Ends :—Some, with hope replenish'd and rebuoy'd,
Return to whence they came—with like intent,
And weave their web again ; some, bow'd and bent,
Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time,
And perish with the reed on which they leant ;
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,
According as their souls were form'd to sink or climb :

XXIII.

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued ;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever : it may be a sound—
A tone of music,—summer's eve—or spring,
A flower—the wind—the Ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound ;

XXIV.

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,
The cold—the changed—perchance the dead—anew,
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many!—yet how few!

XXV.

But my soul wanders ; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins ; there to track
Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave—the lords of earth and sea,

XXVI.

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome !
And even since, and now, fair Italy !
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree ;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee ?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility ;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced.

XXVII.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night—
 Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
 Of glory streams along the Alpine height
 Of blue Friuli's mountains; heaven is free
 From clouds, but of all colours seems to be
 Melted to one vast Iris of the West,
 Where the Day joins the past eternity;
 While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
 Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest!

XXVIII.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
 With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still
 Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
 Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
 As Day and Night contending were, until
 Nature reclaim'd her order:—gently flows
 The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
 The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
 Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it glows,

XXIX.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
 Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
 From the rich sunset to the rising star,
 Their magical variety diffuse:
 And now they change; a paler shadow strews
 Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
 With a new colour as it gasps away,
 The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray.

XXX.

There is a tomb in Arqua ;—rear'd in air,
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover : here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
To raise a language, and his land reclaim
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes :
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

XXXI.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died ;
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years ; and 'tis their pride—
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
His mansion and his sepulchre ; both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain,
Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

XXXII.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,
For they can lure no further ; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday ,

XXXIII.

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die;
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give,
No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive :

XXXIV.

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms. such as were
Of moody texture from their earliest day,
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
Deeming themselves predestin'd to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

XXXV.

Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 'twere a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of l'ete, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

XXXVI.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
 Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
 And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,
 And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell:
 The miserable despot could not quell
 The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
 With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
 Where he had plung'd it. Glory without end
 Scatter'd the clouds away—and on that name attend

XXXVII.

The tears and praises of all time; while thine
 Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
 Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
 Is shaken into nothing; but the link
 Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
 Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn—
 Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
 From thee! if in another station born,
 Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn

XXXVIII.

Thou! form'd to eat, and be despis'd, and die,
 Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
 Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:
He! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,
 Which emanated then, and dazzles now
 In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire;
 And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow
 No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
 That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

XXXIX.

Peace to Torquato's injur'd shade! 'twas his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aim'd with her poison'd arrows; but to miss.
Oh! victor unsurpassed in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combin'd and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine? though all in one
Condens'd their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun.

XL.

Great as thou art, yet paralleled by those,
Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
The bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose
The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,
Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

XLI.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust *
The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves;
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
Whate'er it strikes;—yon head is doubly sacred now.

XLII.

Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
Oh God! that thou wert in thy nakedness
Less lovely or more powerful, and could'st claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

XLIII.

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplord
For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armed torrents pour'd
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde
Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.

XLIV.

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind,
The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

XLV.

For Time hath not rebuilt them, but uprear'd
Barbaric dwellings on their shattered site,
Which only make more mourn'd and more endear'd
The few last rays of their far-scattered light,
And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.
The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

XLVI.

That page is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,
And I in desolation : all that *was*
Of then destruction *is* ; and now, alas !
Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form,
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

XLVII.

Yet, Italy! through every other land
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side,
Mother of arts ! as once of arms ; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide ;
Parent of our religion ! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven !
Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

XLVIII.

y But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
 Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
 A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
 Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
 Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
 To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
 Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps,
 Was modern luxury of commerce born,
 And buried learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

XLIX.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
 The air around with beauty; we inhale
 The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
 Part of its immortality; the veil
 Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
 We stand, and in that form and face behold
 What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail;
 And to the fond idolaters of old
 Envy, the innate flash which such a soul could mould:

L.

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
 Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
 Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there—
 Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art,
 We stand as captives, and would not depart.
 Away!—there need no words, nor terms precise,
 The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
 Where pedantry gulls folly—we have eyes :
 Blood—pulse—and breast, confirm the Dardan Shepherd's pi

LI.

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise ?
Or to more deeply blest Anchises ? or,
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
Before thee thy own vanquish'd Lord of War ?
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek ! while thy lips are,
With lava kisses melting while they burn,
Howered on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn !

LII.

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,
Their full divinity inadequate
That feeling to express, or to improve,
The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
Has moments like their brightest ; but the weight
Of earth recoils upon us ;—let it go !
We can recall such visions, and create,
From what has been, or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

LIII.

I leave to learned fingers, and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell :
Let these describe the undescribable :
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell ;
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

LIV.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
 Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
 Even in itself an immortality,
 Though there were nothing save the past, and this,
 The particle of those sublimities
 Which have relaps'd to chaos :—here repose
 Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
 The starry Galileo, with his woes ;
 Here Machiavelli's earth, return'd to whence it rose.

LV.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
 Might furnish forth creation :—Italy !
 Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand rents
 Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
 And hath denied, to every other sky,
 Spirits which soar from ruin :—thy decay
 Is still impregnate with divinity,
 Which gilds it with revivifying ray ;
 Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

LVI.

But where repose the all Etruscan three—
 Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
 The bard of Prose, creative spirit ! he
 Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay
 Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay
 In death as life ? Are they resolv'd to dust,
 And have their country's marbles nought to say ?
 Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust ?
 Did they not to her breast their filial earth entrust ?

LVII.

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,
 Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore;
 Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
 Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
 Their children's children would in vain adore
 With the remorse of ages; and the crown
 Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
 Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
 His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not thine own.

LVIII.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeathed
 His dust,—and lies it not her Great among,
 With many a sweet and solemn requiem breath'd
 O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue?
 That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
 The poetry of speech? No;—even his tomb
 Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,
 No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
 Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom*!

LIX.

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
 Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
 The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
 Did but of Rome's best son remind her more:
 Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
 Fortress of falling empire! honoured sleeps
 The immortal exile;—Arqua, too, her store
 Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
 While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead and weeps.

LX.

What is her pyramid of precious stones?
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dew
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head

LXI.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,
Where sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;
There be more marvels yet—but not for mine;
For I have been accustomed to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
Than Art in galleries : though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

LXII.

Is of another temper, and I roam
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,
Where courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swoln to rivers with their gore,
Reck through the sultry plain, with legions scatter'd o'er

LXIII.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the phrenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away! ³
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet!

LXIV.

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to eternity; they saw
The Ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel; Nature's law,
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

LXV.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain
Lay where their roots are; but a brook hath ta'en—
A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

LXVI.

But thou, Clitumnus! in thy sweetest wave
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer
Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters—
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters!

LXVII.

And on thy happy shore a temple still,
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;
While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales

LXVIII.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place!
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 'tis his; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green;
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean
With Nature's baptism,—'tis to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice ;
The fall of waters ! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss ;
The hell of waters ! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture ; while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

LXX.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald :—how profound
The gulf ! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

LXXI.

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings, through the vale :—Look back !
Lo ! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,

LXXII.

Horribly beautiful ! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dyes, while all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn :
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

LXXIII.

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which—had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lauwine—might be worshipp'd mor
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glaciers of bleak Mont-Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

LXXIV.

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,
For still they soared unutterably high :
I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye ;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height, displayed
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid.

LXXV.

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
 Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
 And on the curl hangs pausing : not in vain
 May he, who will, his recollections rake,
 And quote in classic raptures, and awake
 The hills with Latian echoes ; I abhorr'd
 Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
 The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word
 In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

LXXVI.

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd
 My sickening memory ; and, though Time hath taught
 My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,
 Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
 By the impatience of my early thought,
 That, with the freshness wearing out before
 My mind could relish what it might have sought,
 If free to choose, I cannot now restore
 Its health ; but what it then detested, still abhor.

LXXVII.

Then farewell, Horace, whom I hated so,
 Not for thy faults, but mine ; it is a curse
 To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
 To comprehend, but never love thy verse,
 Although no deeper moralist rehearse
 Our little life, nor bard prescribe his art,
 Nor livelier satirist the conscience pierce,
 Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,
 Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

LXXVIII.

* Oh Rome ! my country ! city of the soul !
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires ! and controul
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance ? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye !
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX.

The Niobe of nations ! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe ;
An empty urn within her withered hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago ;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now ;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers : dost thou flow,
Old Tiber ! through a marble wilderness ?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress ?

LXXX.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood and Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride ;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb'd the capitol ; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site :—
Chaos of ruins ! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, « here was, or is, » where all is doubly night ?

LXXXI.

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us ; we but feel our way to err :
The Ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,
And knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections ; now we clap
Our hands, and cry « Eureka ! » it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII.

Alas ! the lofty city ! and alas !
The trebly hundred triumphs ! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away !
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictur'd page !—but these shall be
Her resurrection ; all beside—decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free !

LXXXIII.

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,
Triumphant Sylla ! Thou, who did'st subdue
Thy country's foes ere thou would pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due
Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia ;—thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too,
With all thy vices, for thou did'st lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

LXXXIV.

The dictatorial wreath,—could'st thou divine
 To what would one day dwindle that which made
 Thee more than mortal? and that so supine
 By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
 She who was named eternal, and array'd
 Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd
 Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,
 Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,
 Her rushing wings—Oh! she who was almighty hail'd!

LXXXV.

Sylla was first of victors; but our own
 The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell; he
 Too swept off senates while he hewed the throne
 Down to a block—immortal rebel! See
 What crimes it costs to be a moment free
 And famous through all ages! but beneath
 His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
 His day of double victory and death
 Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his breath.

LXXXVI.

The third of the same moon whose former course
 Had all but crown'd him, on the selfsame day
 Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
 And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.
 And show'd not Fortune thus how fane and sway,
 And all we deem delightful, and consume
 Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
 Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb!
 Were they but so in man's, how different were his doom!

LXXXVII.

And thou, dread statue ! yet existent in
The austere form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest. 'mid the assassin's din,
At thy bath'd base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen
Of gods and men, great Nemesis ! did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey ? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene ?

LXXXVIII.

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome !
She-wolf ! whose brazen-imag'd dugs impart
The milk of conquest yet within the dome
Where, as a monument of the anti que art,
Thou standest :—Mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's etherial dart,
And thy limbs black with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget ?

LXXXIX.

Thou dost ;—but all thy foster-babes are dead—
The men of iron ; and the world hath rear'd
Cities from out their sepulchres : men bled
In imitation of the things they fear'd,
And fought and conquer'd, and the same course steer'd,
At apish distance ; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the grave,
But, vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a slave—

XC.

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
 Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
 With steps unequal; for the Roman's mind
 Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould,
 With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
 And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
 The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,
 Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
 At Cleopatra's feet,—and now himself he beam'd,

XCI.

And came—and saw—and conquer'd! But the man
 Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
 Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
 Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
 With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be
 A listener to itself, was strangely fram'd;
 With but one weakest weakness—vanity,
 Coquettish in ambition—still he aim'd—
 At what? can he avouch—or answer what he claim'd?

XCII.

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait
 For the sure grave to level him; few years
 Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
 On whom we tread: For *this* the conqueror rears
 The arch of triumph! and for this the tears
 And blood of earth flow on as they have flowed,
 An universal deluge, which appears
 Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
 And ebbs but to reflow!—Renew thy rainbow, God!

XCIII.

What from this barren being do we reap ?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale ;
Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much light

XCIV.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

XCV.

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allowed,
Averr'd, and known,—and daily, hourly seen—
The yoke that is upon us doubly bowed,
And the intent of tyranny avowed,
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne ;
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

XCVI.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquered be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, armed and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourished in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

XCVII.

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile Ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second fall.

XCVIII.

Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts,—and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

XCIX.

e is a stern round tower of other days,
 as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
 as an army's baffled strength delays,
 ling with half its battlements alone,
 with two thousand years of ivy grown,
 garland of eternity, where wave
 green leaves over all by time o'erthrown;—
 t was this tower of strength? within its cave
 reasure lay so lock'd, so hid?—A woman's grave.

C.

who was she, the lady of the dead,
 bed in a palace? Was she chaste and fair?
 thy a king's—or more—a Roman's bed?
 t race of chiefs and heroes did she bear?
 t daughter of her beauties was the heir?
 lived—how loved—how died she? Was she not
 honoured—and conspicuously there,
 re meaner relics must not dare to rot,
 to commemorate a more than mortal lot?

CI.

she as those who love their lords, or they
 love the lords of others? such have been,
 in the olden time Rome's annals say.
 she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
 ie light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
 use of joy—or 'gainst it did she war,
 terate in virtue? Did she lean
 he soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
 om amongst her griefs?—for such the affections are.

CII.

Perchance she died in youth : it may be, bowed
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weighed upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites—early death ; yet shed
A sunset charm around her, and illumine
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

CIII.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver grey
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome——But whither would conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife ; Behold his love or pride!

CIV.

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou tomb ! and other days come back on me
With recollected music, though the tone
Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind ;
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind;

CV.

And from the planks, far shattered o'er the rocks,
 Built me a little bark of hope, once more
 To battle with the Ocean and the shocks
 Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar
 Which rushes on the solitary shore
 Where all lies foundered that was ever dear ;
 But could I gather from the wave-torn store *torn*
 Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer ?
 There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

CVI.

Then let the winds howl on ! their harmony
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
 The sound shall temper with the owl's cry,
 As I now hear them, in the fading light
 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,
 Answering each other on the Palatine,
 With their large eyes, all glistening grey and bright,
 And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
 What are our petty griefs ?—let me not number mine.

CVII.

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown
 Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd
 On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown
 In fragments, chok'd up vaults, and frescos steep'd
 In subterranean damp, where the owl peep'd,
 Deeming it midnight :—Temples, baths, or halls,
 Pronounce who can ; for all that Learning reap'd
 From her research hath been, that these are walls—
 Behold the Imperial Mount ! 'tis thus the mighty falls (1).

(1) The Palatine is one mass of ruins, particularly on the side towards the Circus Maximus. The very soil is formed of crumbled brick-work. Nothing has been told, nothing can

CVIII.

There is the moral of all human tales;
 'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
 First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,
 Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.
 And History, with all her volumes vast,
 Hath but *one* page,—'tis better written here,
 Where gorgeous Tyranny had thus amass'd
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask——Away with words!
 draw near,

CIX.

Admire, exult—despise—laugh, weep,—for here
 There is such matter for all feeling :—Man!
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
 Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van
 Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd!
 Where are its golden roofs? where those who dared to build?

CX.

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
 Thou nameless column with the buried base!
 What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow?
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.
 Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
 Titus or Trajan's? No—'tis that of Time:
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace
 Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb
 To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime,
 he told. to satisfy the belief of any but a Roman antiquary.
 —See—Historical Illustrations, page 206.

CXI.

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars : they had contain'd
A spirit which with these would find a home,
The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,
The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,
But yielded back his conquests :—he was more
Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd
With household blood and wine, serenely wore
His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's name adore.

CXII.

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place
Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep
Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,
The promontory whence the traitor's leap
Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap
Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,
A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

CXIII.

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood :
Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,
From the first hour of empire in the bud
To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd;
But long before had Freedom's face been veil'd,
And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assail'd
Trode on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

CXIV.

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame—
The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree
Of Freedom's withered trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
The Forum's champion, and the people's chief—
Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas! too brief.

CXV.

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art
Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green, wild margin now no more erase
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prisoned in marble, bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue; with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers and ivy, creep,

CXVII.

Fantastically tangled; the green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems coloured by its skies.

CXVIII.

Here did'st thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover;
The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befell?
This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle?

CXIX.

And did'st thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,
Share with immortal transports? could thine art
Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
The dull satiety which all destroys—
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloy's?

CXX.

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

CXXI.

Oh Love! no habitant of earth thou art—
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;
The mind has made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd—wearied—
 wrung—and riven.

CXXII.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation :—where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?
In him alone. Can Nature shew so fair?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,
The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

CXXIII.

Who loves, raves—'tis youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still; as charm by charm unwinds
Which rebel our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such, yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize,—wealthiest when most undone.

CXXIV.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
Sick—sick; unfound the boon—unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
But all too late,—so are we doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'tis the same,
Each idle—and all ill—and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name,
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXV.

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved.
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,
Envenomed with irrevocable wrong;
And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
And miscreator, makes and helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns Hope to dust,—the dust we all have trod.

CXXVI.

Our life is a false nature—'tis not in
The harmony of things,—this hard decree,
This uneradicable taint of sin,
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see—
And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

CXXVII.

Yet let us ponder boldly—'tis a base
Abandonment of reason to resign
Our right of thought—our last and only place
Of refuge ; this, at least shall still be mine :
Though from our birth the faculty divine
Is chain'd and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,
And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind.

CXXVIII.

Arches on arches ! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
Her Coliseum stands ; the moonbeams shine
As 'twere its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here, to illumine
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
Of contemplation ; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

CXXIX.

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
 Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
 And shadows forth its glory. There is given
 Unto the things of earth, which time hath bent,
 A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
 His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
 And magic in the ruined battlement,
 For which the palace of the present hour
 Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

CXXX.

Oh Time! the beautifier of the dead,
 Adorner of the ruin, comforter
 And only healer when the heart hath bled—
 Time! the corrector where our judgments err,
 The test of truth, love,—sole philosopher,
 For all beside are sophists, from thy thrift,
 Which never loses though it dot'a defer—
 Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
 My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

CXXXI.

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
 And temple more divinely desolate,
 Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
 Ruins of years—though few, yet full of fate:
 If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
 Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne
 Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
 Which shall not overwhelm me, let me not have worn
 This iron in my soul in vain—shall *they* not mourn?

CXXXII.

And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Lost the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long—
Thou, who did'st call the Furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution—just,
Had it but been from hands less near—in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
Dost thou not hear my heart?—Awake! thou shalt, and m

CXXXIII.

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
For my ancestral faults or mine the wound
I bleed withal, and, had it been conferr'd
With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound;
But now my blood shall not sink in the ground;
To thee I do devote it—*thou* shalt take
The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found,
Which if *I* have not taken for the sake——
But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

CXXXIV.

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now
I shrink from what is suffered: let him speak
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;
But in this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

CXXXV.

That curse shall be Forgiveness.—Have I not—
Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven!—
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffered things to be forgiven?
Have I not had my brain seared, my heart riven,
Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied away?
And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could do?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII.

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain :
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain,
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire ;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of,
Like the remembered tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their softened spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

CXXXVIII.

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear;
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles; and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear,
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

CXXXIX.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmured pity, or loud-roared applause,
As man was slaughtered by his fellow man.
And wherefore slaughtered? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial-pleasure—Wherefore not?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

CXL.

I see before me the gladiator lie :
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his drooped head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch

CXLI.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

CXLI.

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise,
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

CXLI.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been reared;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass
And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.
Hath it indeed been plundered, or but cleared?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is neared:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

CXLIV.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there ;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the grey walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head ;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead :
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

CXLV.

« While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand ;
« When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall ;
« And when Rome falls—the World. » From our own
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient ; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unaltered all ;
Rome and her ruin past redemption's skill,
The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye

CXLVI.

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime—
Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus—spared and blest by time ;
Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome !
Shalt thou not last ? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety—Pantheon!—pride of Rome !

CXLVII.

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts!
 Despoiled yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
 A holiness appealing to all hearts—
 To art a model; and to him who treads
 Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
 Her light through thy sole aperture; to those
 Who worship, here are altars for their beads;
 And they who feel for genius may repose
 Their eyes on honoured forms, whose busts around them close.

CXLVIII.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light
 What do I gaze on? Nothing: look again!
 Two forms are slowly shadowed on my sight—
 Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
 It is not so; I see them full and plain—
 An old man, and a female young and fair,
 Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein
 The blood is nectar:—but what doth she there,
 With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

CXLIX.

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
 Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took
 Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,
 Blest into mother, in the innocent look,
 Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
 No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives
 Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
 She sees her little bud put forth its leaves—
 What may the fruit be yet?—I know not—Cain was Eve's.

CL.

But here youth offers to old age the food,
 The milk of his own gift :—it is her sire
 To whom she renders back the debt of blood,
 Born with her birth. No ; he shall not expire
 While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
 Of health and holy feeling can provide
 Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher
 Than Egypt's river :—from that gentle side
 Drink, drink and live, old man ! Heaven's realm holds
 no such tide.

CLI.

The starry fable of the milky way
 Has not thy story's purity ; it is
 A constellation of a sweeter ray,
 And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
 Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
 Where sparkle distant worlds :—Oh ! holiest nurse !
 No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
 To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
 With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

CLII.

Turn to the mole which Hadrian rear'd on high, &
 Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
 Colossal copyist of deformity,
 Whose travelled phantasy from the far Nile's
 Enormous model, doom'd the artist's toils
 To build for giants, and for his vain earth
 His shrunken ashes raise this dome : How smiles
 The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
 To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth !

CLIII.

But lo! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,
To which Diana's marvel was a cell—
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle—
Its columns strew the wilderness; and dwell
The hyæna and the jackall in their shade :
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd ;

CLIV.

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—
Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.
Since Zion's desolation, when that He
Forsook his former city, what could be,
Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,
Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
Power, glory, strength, and beauty, all are aisled
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV.

Enter : its grandeur overwhelms thee not ;
And why? it is not lessened; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality; and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

CLVI.

Thou movest—but increasing with the advance,
 Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
 Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
 Vastness which grows—but grows to harmonize—
 All musical in its immensities;
 Rich marbles—richer painting—shrines where flame
 The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
 In air with Earth's chief structures; though their frame
 Sits on the firm-set ground—and this the clouds must claim.

CLVII.

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
 To separate contemplation, the great whole;
 And as the Ocean many bays will make,
 That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
 To more immediate objects, and control
 Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
 Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
 In mighty graduations, part by part,
 The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

CLVIII.

Not by its fault—but thine : Our outward sense
 Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is
 That what we have of feeling most intense . . .
 Outstrips our faint expression; even so this
 Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
 Fools our fond gaze, and, greatest of the great,
 Defies at first our Nature's littleness,
 Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
 Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CLIX.

Then pause, and be enlightened ; there is more
 In such a survey than the sating gaze
 Of wonder, pleased, or awe which would adore
 The worship of the place, or the mere praise
 Of art and its great masters, who could raise
 What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan ;
 The fountain of sublimity displays
 Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man
 Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

CLX.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
 Laocoon's torture dignifying pain—
 A father's love and mortal's agony
 With an immortal's patience blending :—Vain
 The struggle ; vain, against the coiling strain,
 And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
 The old man's clench ; the long envenomed chain
 Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
 Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

CLXI.

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
 The God of life, and poesy, and light—
 The Sun in human limbs arrayed, and brow
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight ;
 The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
 With an immortal's vengeance ; in his eye
 And nostril, beautiful disdain, and might,
 And majesty flash their full lightnings by,
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII.

But in his delicate form—a dream of Love,
 Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
 Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
 And madden'd in that vision—are express
 All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
 The mind with in its most unearthly mood,
 When each conception was a heavenly guest—
 A ray of immortality—and stood,
 Starlike, around, until they gathered to a god!

CLXIII.

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid
 By him to whom the energy was given
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd
 With an eternal glory—which, if made
 By human hands, is not of human thought;
 And Time himself hath hallowed it, nor laid
 One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 'tw
 wrought.

CLXIV.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
 The being who upheld it through the past?
 Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
 He is no more—these breathings are his last;
 His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
 And he himself as nothing :—if he was
 Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
 With forms which live and suffer—let that pass—
 His shadow fades away into destruction's mass,

CLXV.

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the cloud
Between us sinks, and all which ever glowed,
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allowed
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

CLXVI.

And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the frame
Shall be resolv'd to something less than this
Its wretched essence, and to dream of fame,
And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear,—but never more,
Oh happier thought! can we be made the same
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore.

CLXVII.

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground,
The gulf is thick with phantoms; but the chief
Seems royal still, though with her head discrown'd,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

CLXVIII.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
 Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?
 Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
 Some less majestic, less beloved head?
 In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
 The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
 Death hush'd that pang for ever : with thee fled
 The present happiness and promised joy
 Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to cloy.

CLXIX.

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
 Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored!
 Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,
 And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard
 Her many griefs for ONE; for she had pour'd
 Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
 Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
 And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed!
 The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

CLXX.

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made;
 Thy bridal's fruit is ashes : in the dust
 The fair-haired Daughter of the Isles is laid,
 The love of millions! How we did entrust
 Futurity to her! and, though it must
 Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd
 Our children should obey her child, and bless'd
 Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd
 Like stars to shepherds' eyes :—'twas but a meteor beam'd.

CLXXI.

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well :
The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung
Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late,—

CLXXII.

These might have been her destiny; but no,
Our hearts deny it : and so young, so fair,
Good without effort, great without a foe;
But now a bride and mother—and now *there*!
How many ties did that stern moment tear!
From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast
Is linked the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and oppress
The land which loved thee so that none could love thee best.

CLXXIII.

Lo, Nemi! navelled in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The Ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coiled into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

CLXXIV.

And near Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad Ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
“Arms and the Man,” whose re-ascending star
Rose o'er an empire; but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome;—and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight,
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's delight.

CLXXV.

But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be,—
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland Ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we followed on till the dark Euxine roll'd

CLXXVI.

Upon the blue Symplegades : long years—
Long, though not very many, since have done
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun :
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,
We have had our reward—and it is here;
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear.
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII.

Oh! that the Desart were my dwelling place,
With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!
Ye Elements!—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

CLXXIX.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore ;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

CLXXX.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the yile strength he wield
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth :—there let him lay.

CLXXXI.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nation's quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to desarts :—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convuls'd—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

CLXXXV.

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ,—
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering, faint, and low.

CLXXXVI.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon, and scallop-shell;
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain!

END OF CANTO IV.

NOTES

TO

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO I.

Note 1, page 30, line 1.

Oh, thou Parnassus!

These stanzas were written in Castri (Delphos), at the foot of Parnassus, now called Λιακούρα—Liakura.

CANTO II.

Note 1, page 49, line 15.

Here dwells the caloyer.

The Greek monks are so called.

Note 2, page 67, line 10.

Tambourgi! Tambourgi! thy 'larum afar, etc.

These stanzas are partly taken from different Albinese songs, as far as I was able to make them out by the exposition of the Albinese in Romaic and Italian.

CANTO. III.

Note 1, page 86, line 8.

And all went merry as a marriage-bell.

On the night previous to the action, it is said that a ball was given at Brussels.

Notes 2 and 3, page 87, line 28.

And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears.

Sir Evan Cameron, and his descendant Donald, the «gentle Lochiel» of the «forty-five.»

Note 4, page 90, line 15.

Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore.

The (fabled) apples on the brink of the lake Asphaltes were said to be fair without, and within ashes.—Vide Tacitus, *Histor.* l. 5. 7.

Note 5, page 102, line 18.

And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.

Julia Alpinula, a young Aventian priestess, died soon after a vain endeavour to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor by Aulus Cæcina. Her epitaph was discovered many years ago;—it is thus—

Julia Alpinula
Hic jaceo
Infelicis patris infelix proles,
Dææ Aventiæ Sacerdos;
Exorare patris necem non potui
Malè mori in fatis illi erat.
Vixi annos XXIII.

I know of no human composition so affecting as this, nor a history of deeper interest. These are the names and actions which ought not to perish, and to which we turn with a true and healthy tenderness, from the wretched and glittering detail of a confused mass of conquest and battles, with which the mind is roused for a time to a false and feverish sympathy, from whence it recurs at length with all the nausea consequent on such intoxication.

Note 6, page 115, line 10.

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes.

Voltaire and Gibbon.

CANTO IV.

Note 1, page 120, line 1.

*I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand.*

The communication between the Ducal palace and the prisons of Venice is by a gloomy bridge, or covered gallery, high above the water, and divided by a stone wall into a passage and a cell. The state dungeons, called « pozzi, » or wells, were sunk in the thick walls of the palace; and the prisoner when taken out to die was conducted across the gallery to the other side, and being then led back into the other compartment, or cell, upon the bridge, was there strangled. The low portal through which the criminal was taken into this cell is now walled up; but the passage is still open, and is still known by the name of the Bridge of Sighs.

Note 2, p. 133, line 19.

*The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust,
The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves.*

Before the remains of Ariosto were removed from the Benedictine church to the library of Ferrara, his bust, which surmounted the tomb, was struck by lightning, and a crown of iron laurels melted away.

Note 3, p. 141, line 5.

An earthquake reeled unheededly away.

« *And such was their mutual animosity, so intent were they upon the battle, that the earthquake, which overthrew in a great part many of the cities of Italy, which turned the course of rapid streams, poured back the sea upon the rivers, and tore down the very mountains, was not felt by one of the combatants.* » * Such is the description of Livy.

* « *Tantusque fuit ardor animorum, adeò intentus pugne animus, ut cum terræ motum qui multarum urbium Italiæ magnas partes prostravit, avertitque cursu rapido amnes, mare fluminibus invexit, montes lapsu ingenti proruit, nemo pugnantium sensit.* » Tit.-Liv. lib. xxij. cap. xij.

It may be doubted whether modern tactics would admit of such an abstraction.

Note 4, page 170, line 20.

Turn to the Mole which Hadrian rear'd on high.

The castle of Saint Angelo. See—Historical Illustrations.

BEPPPO,

A VENETIAN STORY.

ROSALIND. Farewell, Monsieur Traveller : Look, you lisp, and wear strange suits ; disable all the benefits of your own country ; be out of love with your Nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are ; or I will scarce think that you have swam in a GONDOLA.

As You Like It, Act. IV, Sc. I,

Annotation of the Commentators.

That is, been at *Venice*, which was much visited by the young English gentlemen of those times, and was then what *Paris is now* —the seat of all dissoluteness. S. A.

BEPPPO.

I.

'Tis known, at least it should be, that throughout
All countries of the Catholic persuasion,
Some weeks before Shrove Tuesday comes about,
The people take their fill of recreation,
And buy repentance, here they grow devout,
However high their rank, or low their station,
With fiddling, feasting, dancing, drinking, masquing,
And other things which may be had for asking.

II.

The moment night with dusky mantle covers
The skies (and the more duskily the better),
The time less liked by husbands than by lovers
Begins, and prudery flings aside her fetter;
And gaiety on restless tiptoe hovers,
Giggling with all the gallants who beset her;
And there are songs and quavers, roaring, humming,
Guitars, and every other sort of strumming.

III.

And there are dresses splendid, but fantastical,
Masks of all times and nations, Turks and Jews,
And harlequins and clowns, with feats gymnastical,
Greeks, Romans, Yankee-doodles, and Hindoos;

All kinds of dress, except the ecclesiastical,
 All people, as their fancies hit, may choose,
 But no one in these parts may quiz the clergy,
 Therefore take heed, ye Freethinkers! I charge ye.

IV.

You'd better walk about begirt with briars,
 Instead of coat and small-clothes, than put on
 A single stitch reflecting upon friars,
 Although you swore it only was in fun;
 They'd haul you o'er the coals, and stir the fires
 Of Phlegethon with every mother's son,
 Nor say one mass to cool the cauldron's bubble
 That boiled your bones, unless you paid them double.

V.

But saving this, you may put on whate'er
 You like, by way of doublet, cape, or cloak,
 Such as in Monmouth-street, or in Rag Fair,
 Would rig you out in seriousness or joke;
 And even in Italy such places are
 With prettier names in softer accents spoke,
 For bating Covent Garden, I can hit on
 No place that's called « Piazza » in Great Britain.

VI.

This feast is named the Carnival, which being
 Interpreted, implies « farewell to flesh : »
 So call'd, because the name and thing agreeing,
 Through Lent they live on fish both salt and fresh.
 But why they usher Lent with so much glee in,
 Is more than I can tell, although I guess
 'Tis as we take a glass with friends at parting,
 In the stage-coach or packet, just at starting.

VII.

And thus they bid farewell to carnal dishes,
 And solid meats, and highly spic'd ragouts,
 To live for forty days on ill-dress'd fishes,
 Because they have no sauces to their stews,
 A thing which causes many "poohs" and "pishes,"
 And several oaths (which would not suit the Muse),
 From travellers accusom'd from a boy
 To eat their salmon, at the least with soy;

VIII.

And therefore humbly I would recommend
 "The curious in fish-sauce," before they cross
 The sea, to bid their cook, or wife, or friend,
 Walk or ride to the Strand, and buy in gross
 (Or if set out beforehand, these may send,
 By any means least liable to loss),
 Ketchup, Soy, Chili-vinegar, and Harvey,
 Or by the Lord! a Lent will well nigh starve ye;

IX.

That is to say, if your religion's Roman,
 And you at Rome would do as Romans do,
 According to the proverb,—although no man,
 If foreign, is oblig'd to fast; and you,
 If protestant, or sickly, or a woman,
 Would rather dine in sin on a ragout—
 Dine, and be d—d! I don't mean to be coarse,
 But that's the penalty, to say no worse.

X.

Of all the places where the Carnival
 Was most facetious in the days of yore,
 For dance, and song, and serenade, and ball,
 And masque, and mime, and mystery, and more

Than I have time to tell now, or at all,
 Venice the bell from every city bore,
 And at the moment when I fix my story,
 That sea-born city was in all her glory.

XI.

They've pretty faces yet, these same Venetians,
 Black eyes, arch'd brows, and sweet expressions
 Such as of old were copied from the Grecians,
 In ancient arts by moderns mimick'd ill;
 And like so many Venuses of Titian's
 (The best's at Florence—see it, if ye will),
 They look when leaning over the balcony,
 Or stepp'd from out a picture by Giorgione,

XII.

Whose tints are truth and beauty at their best;
 And when you to Manfrini's palace go,
 That picture (howsoever fine the rest)
 Is loveliest to my mind of all the show;
 It may perhaps be also to *your* zest,
 And that's the cause I rhyme upon it so,
 'Tis but a portrait of his son, and wife,
 And self; but *such* a woman! love in life!

XIII.

Love in full life and length, not love ideal,
 No, nor ideal beauty, that fine namè,
 But something better still, so very real,
 That the sweet model must have been the same;
 A thing that you would purchase, beg, or steal
 Were't not impossible, besides a shame:
 The face recalls some face, as 'twere with pain,
 You once have seen, but ne'er will see again;

XIV.

One of those forms which flit by us, when we
 Are young, and fix our eyes on every face;
 And, oh! the loveliness at times we see
 In momentary gliding, the soft grace,
 The youth, the bloom, the beauty which agree,
 In many a nameless being we retrace,
 Whose course and home we knew not, nor shall know,
 Like the lost Pleiad seen no more below.

XV.

I said that like a picture by Giorgione
 Venetian women were, and so they *are*,
 Particularly seen from a balcony,
 (For beauty's sometimes best set off afar)
 And there, just like a heroine of Goldoni,
 They peep from out the blind, or o'er the bar;
 And, truth to say, they're mostly very pretty,
 And rather like to show it, more's the pity!

XVI.

For glances beget ogles, ogles sighs,
 Sighs wishes, wishes words, and words a letter,
 Which flies on wings of light-heeled Mercuries,
 Who do such things because they know no better;
 And then, God knows what mischief may arise,
 When love links two young people in one fetter,
 Vile assignations, and adulterous beds,
 Elopements, broken vows, and hearts, and heads.

XVII.

Shakespeare described the sex in Desdemona
 As very fair, but yet suspect in fame;
 And to this day, from Venice to Verona,
 Such matters may be probably the same,

Except that since those times was never known a
Husband whom mere suspicion could inflame
To suffocate a wife no more than twenty,
Because she had a « cavalier servente. »

XVIII.

Their jealousy (if they are ever jealous)
Is of a fair complexion altogether,
Not like that sooty devil of Othello's,
Which smothers women in a bed of feather,
But worthier of these much more jolly fellows,
When weary of the matrimonial tether
His head for such a wife no mortal bothers,
But takes at once another, or another's.

XIX.

Did'st ever see a gondola? For fear
You should not, I'll describe it you exactly :
'Tis a long covered boat that's common here,
Carved at the prow, built lightly, but compactly,
Rowed by two rowers, each called « gondolier ; »
It glides along the water, looking blackly,
Just like a coffin clapt in a canoe,
Where none can make out what you say or do.

XX.

And up and down the long canals they go,
And under the Rialto shoot along,
By night and day, all paces, swift or slow,
And round the theatres, a sable throng,
They wait in their dusk livery of woe ;
But not to them do woeful things belong,
For sometimes they contain a deal of fun,
Like mourning coaches when the funeral's done.

XXI.

But to my story.—'Twas some years ago,
It may be thirty, forty, more or less,
The carnival was at its height, and so
Were all kinds of buffoonery and dress;
A certain lady went to see the show,
Her real name I know not, nor can guess,
And so we'll call her Laura, if you please,
Because it slips into my verse with ease.

XXII.

She was not old, nor young, nor at the years
Which certain people call a "*certain age*,"
Which yet the most uncertain age appears,
Because I never heard, nor could engage
A person yet by prayers, or bribes, or tears,
To name, define by speech, or write on page,
The period meant precisely by that word,—
Which surely is exceedingly absurd.

XXIII.

Laura was blooming still, had made the best
Of time, and time returned the compliment,
And treated her genteelly, so that, drest,
She looked extremely well where'er she went :
A pretty woman is a welcome guest,
And Laura's brow a frown had rarely bent ;
Indeed she shone all smiles, and seemed to flatter
Mankind with her black eyes for looking at her.

XXIV.

She was a married woman ; 'tis convenient,
Because in Christian countries 'tis a rule
To view their little slips with eyes more lenient ;
Whereas, if single ladies play the fool,

(Unless, within the period intervenient,
 A well-timed wedding makes the scandal cool)
 I don't know how they ever can get over it,
 Except they manage never to discover it.

XXV.

Her husband sailed upon the Adriatic,
 And made some voyages, too, in other seas,
 And when he lay in quarantine for pratique,
 (A forty days' precaution 'gainst disease,)
 His wife would mount, at times, her highest attic,
 For thence she could discern the ship with ease :
 He was a merchant trading to Aleppo,
 His name Giuseppe, called more briefly, Beppo (1).

XXVI.

He was a man as dusky as a Spaniard,
 Sunburnt with travel, yet a portly figure,
 Though coloured, as it were, within a tanyard ;
 He was a person both of sense and vigour—
 A better seaman never yet did man yard :
 And *she*, although her manners shewed no rigour,¹
 Was deemed a woman of the strictest principle,
 So much as to be thought almost invincible.

XXVII.

But several years elapsed since they had met ;
 Some people thought the ship was lost, and some
 That he had somehow blundered into debt,
 And did not like the thoughts of steering home ;
 And there were several offered any bet,
 Or that he would, or that he would not come,
 For most men (till by losing rendered sager)
 Will back their own opinions with a wager.

(1) Beppo is the *Joe* of the Italian *Joseph*.

XXVIII.

'Tis said that their last parting was pathetic,
 As partings often are, or ought to be,
 And their presentiment was quite prophetic
 That they should never more each other see,
 (A sort of morbid feeling, half poetic,
 Which I have known occur in two or three)
 When kneeling on the shore upon her sad knee,
 He left this Adriatic Ariadne.

XXIX.

And Laura waited long, and wept a little,
 And thought of wearing weeds, as well she might;
 She almost lost all appetite for victual,
 And could not sleep with ease alone at night;
 She deemed the window-frames and shutters brittle
 Against a daring house-breaker or sprite,
 And so she thought it prudent to connect her
 With a vice-husband, *chiefly* to *protect* her.

XXX.

She chose, (and what is there they will not choose,
 If only you will but oppose their choice?)
 Till Beppo should return from his long cruise,
 And bid once more her faithful heart rejoice,
 A man some women like, and yet abuse—
 A coxcomb was he by the public voice;
 A count of wealth, they said, as well as quality,
 And in his pleasures of great liberality.

XXXI.

And then he was a count, and then he knew
 Music and dancing, fiddling, French and Tuscan;
 The last not easy, be it known to you,
 For few Italians speak the right Etruscan.

He was a critic upon operas too,
 And knew all niceties of the sock and buskin;
 And no Venetian audience could endure a
 Song, scene, or air, when he cried « seccatura. »

XXXII.

His « bravo » was decisive, for that sound
 Hushed « academie, » sighed in silent awe;
 The fiddlers trembled as he looked around,
 For fear of some false note's detected flaw.
 The « prima donna's » tuneful heart would bound,
 Dreading the deep damnation of his « bah! »
 Soprano, basso, even the contra-alto,
 Wished him five fathom under the Rialto.

XXXIII.

He patroniz'd the Improvisatori,
 Nay, could himself extemporize some stanzas,
 Wrote rhymes, sang songs, could also tell a story,
 Sold pictures, and was skilful in the dance as
 Italians can be, though in this their glory
 Must surely yield the palm to that which France has
 In short, he was a perfect cavaliero,
 And to his very valet seem'd a hero.

XXXIV.

Then he was faithful too, as well as amorous,
 So that no sort of female could complain;
 Although they're now and then a little clamorous,
 He never put the pretty souls in pain;
 His heart was one of those which most enamour us,
 Wax to receive, and marble to retain.
 He was a lover of the good old school,
 Who still become more constant as they cool.

XXXV.

No wonder such accomplishments should turn
 A female head, however sage and steady—
 With scarce a hope that Beppo could return,
 In law he was almost as good as dead; he
 Nor sent, nor wrote, nor shew'd the least concern,
 And she had waited several years already;
 And really if a man won't let us know
 That he's alive, he's *dead*, or should be so.

XXXVI.

Besides, within the Alps, to every woman
 (Although, God knows, it is a grievous sin)
 'Tis, I may say, permitted to have *two* men;
 I can't tell who first brought the custom in,
 But « Cavalier Serventes » are quite common,
 And no one notices, nor cares a pin;
 And we may call this (not to say the worst)
 A *second* marriage which corrupts the *first*.

XXXVII.

The word was formerly a « Cicisbeo, »
 But *that* is now grown vulgar and indecent;
 The Spaniards call the person a *Cortejo*, »
 For the same mode subsists in Spain, though recent;
 In short it reaches from the Po to Teio,
 And may perhaps at last be o'er the sea sent.
 But Heaven preserve Old England from such courses!
 Or what becomes of damage and divorces?

XXXVIII.

However, I still think, with all due deference
 To the fair *single* part of the Creation,
 That married ladies should preserve the preference
 In *tête-à-tête* or general conversation—

And this I say without peculiar reference
To England, France, or any other nation—
Because they know the world, and are at ease,
And being natural, naturally please.

XXXIX.

'Tis true, your budding Miss is very charming,
But shy and awkward at first coming out,
So much alarmed, that she is quite alarming,
All giggle, blush,—half pertness, and half pout;
And glancing at *Mumma*, for fear there's harm in
What you, she, it, or they, may be about,
The Nursery still lisps out in all they utter—
Besides, they always smell of bread and butter.

XL.

But « Cavalier Servente » is the phrase
Used in politest circles to express
This supernumerary slave, who stays
Close to the lady as a part of dress,
Her word the only law which he obeys.
His is no sinecure, as you may guess;
Coach, servants, gondola, he goes to call,
And carries fan and tippet, gloves and shawl.

XLI.

With all its sinful doings, I must say,
That Italy's a pleasant place to me,
Who love to see the Sun shine every day,
And vines (not nail'd to walls) from tree to tree
Festoon'd, much like the back scene of a play
Or melodrame, which people flock to see,
When the first act is ended by a dance
In vineyards copied from the south of France.

XLII.

I like on Autumn evenings to ride out,
Without being forc'd to bid my groom be sure
My cloak is round his middle strapp'd about,
Because the skies are not the most secure;
I know too that, if stopp'd upon my route,
Where the green alleys windingly allure,
Reeling with *grapes* red waggons choke the way,—
In England 'twould be dung, dust, or a dray.

XLIII.

I also like to dine on becaficas,
To see the Sun set, sure he'll rise to-morrow,
Not through a misty morning twinkling weak as
A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin sorrow,
But with all Heaven t'himself; that day will break as
Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forc'd to borrow
That sort of farthing candlelight which glimmers
Where reeking London's smoky cauldron simmers.

XLIV.

I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,
Which melts like kisses from a female mouth,
And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,
With syllables which breathe of the sweet South,
And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,
That not a single accent seems uncouth,
Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting guttural,
Which we're oblig'd to hiss, and spit, and sputter all.

XLV.

I like the women too (forgive my folly),
From the rich peasant-cheek of ruddy bronze,
And large black eyes that flash on you a volley
Of rays that say a thousand things at once,

'To the high dama's brow, more melancholy,
 But clear, and with a wild and liquid glance,
 Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,
 Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies.

XLVI.

Eve of the land which still is Paradise !
 Italian beauty ! did'st thou not inspire
 Raphael, who died in thy embrace, and vies
 With all we know of Heaven, or can desire,
 In what he hath bequeath'd us?—in what guise,
 Though flashing from the fervour of the lyre,
 Would *words* describe thy past and present glow,
 While yet Canova can create below ?

XLVII.

« England! with all thy faults I love thee still, »
 I said at Calais, and have not forgot it;
 I like to speak and lucubrate my fill;
 I like the government (but that is not it);
 I like the freedom of the press and quill;
 I like the Habeas Corpus (when we've got it);
 I like a parliamentary debate,
 Particularly when 'tis not too late;

XLVIII.

I like the taxes, when they're not too many;
 I like a sea-coal fire, when not too dear;
 I like a beef-steak, too, as well as any;
 Have no objection to a pot of beer;
 I like the weather, when it is not rainy,
 That is, I like two months of every year.
 And so God save the Regent, Church, and King!
 Which means that I like all and every thing.

XLIX.

Our standing army, and disbanded seamen,
 Poor's rate, Reform, my own, the nation's debt,
 Our little riots just to show we are free men,
 Our trifling bankruptcies in the Gazette,
 Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women,
 All these I can forgive, and those forget,
 And greatly venerate our recent glories,
 And wish they were not owing to the Tories.

L.

But to my tale of Laura,—for I find
 Digression is a sin, that by degrees
 Becomes exceeding tedious to my mind,
 And, therefore, may the reader too displease—
 The gentle reader, who may wax unkind,
 And, caring little for the author's ease,
 Insist on knowing what he means : a hard
 And hapless situation for a bard.

LI.

O that I had the art of easy writing
 What should be easy reading ! could I scale
 Parnassus, where the Muses sit inditing
 Those pretty poems never known to fail,
 How quickly would I print (the world delighting)
 A Grecian, Syrian, or Assyrian tale;
 And sell you, mix'd with Western sentimentalism,
 Some samples of the finest Orientalism.

LII.

But I am but a nameless sort of person,
 (A broken Dandy lately on my travels)
 And take for rhyme, to hook my rambling verse on,
 The first that Walker's Lexicon unravels,

And when I can't find that, I put a worse on,
 Not caring as I ought for critics' cavils;
 I've half a mind to tumble down to prose,
 But verse is more in fashion—so here goes.

LIII.

The count and Laura made their new arrangement,
 Which lasted, as arrangements sometimes do,
 For half a dozen years without estrangement;
 They had their little differences too,
 Those jealous whiffs, which never any change meant :
 In such affairs there probably are few
 Who have not had this pouting sort of squabble,
 From sinners of high station to the rabble.

LIV.

But on the whole, they were a happy pair,
 As happy as unlawful love could make them;
 The gentleman was fond, the lady fair,
 Their chains so slight, 'twas not worth while to break them
 The world beheld them with indulgent air;
 The pious only wish'd « the devil take them ! »
 He took them not; he very often waits,
 And leaves old sinners to be young ones' baits.

LV.

But they were young : Oh ! what without our youth
 Would love be ! What would youth be without love !
 Youth lends it joy, and sweetness, vigour, truth,
 Heart, soul, and all that seems as from above;
 But languishing with years it grows uncouth—
 One of few things experience don't improve,
 Which is, perhaps, the reason why old fellows
 Are always so preposterously jealous.

LVI.

It was the carnival, as I have said
 Some six and thirty stanzas back, and so
 Laura the usual preparations made,
 Which you do when your mind's made up to go
 To-night to Mrs. Boehm's masquerade,
 Spectator, or partaker in the show ;
 The only difference known between the cases
 Is—*here* we have six weeks of « varnished faces. »

LVII.

Laura, when drest, was (as I sang before)
 A pretty woman as was ever seen,
 Fresh as the Angel o'er a new inn door,
 Or frontispiece of a new magazine,
 With all the fashions which the last month wore,
 Coloured, and silver paper leav'd between
 That and the titlepage, for fear the press
 Should soil with parts of speech the parts of dress.

LVIII.

They went to the Ridotto ;—'tis a hall
 Where people dance, and sup, and dance again ;
 Its proper name, perhaps, were a masqu'd ball,
 But that's of no importance to my strain ;
 'Tis (on a smaller scale) like our Vauxhall,
 Excepting that it can't be spoilt by rain ;
 The company is « mix'd » (the phrase I quote is
 As much as saying, they're below your notice) ;

LIX.

For a « mixt company » implies that, save
 Yourself and friends, and half a hundred more,
 Whom you may bow to without looking grave,
 The rest are but a vulgar set, the bore

Of public places, where they basely brave
 The fashionable stare of twenty score
 Of well-bred persons, called « *the World*; » but I,
 Although I know them, really don't know why.

LX.

This is the case in England; at least ^{was}
 During the dynasty of Dandies, now
 Perchance succeeded by some other ^{class}
 Of imitated imitators :—how
 Irreparably soon decline, alas !
 The demagogues of fashion : all below
 Is frail ; how easily the world is lost
 By love, or war, and now and then by frost !

LXI.

Crush'd was Napoleon by the northern Thor,
 Who knock'd his army down with icy hammer,
 Stopp'd by the *elements*, like a whaler, or
 A blundering novice in his new French grammar;
 Good cause had he to doubt the chance of war,
 And as for Fortune—but I dare not d—n her,
 Because, were I to ponder to infinity,
 The more I should believe in her divinity.

LXII.

She rules the present, past, and all to be yet,
 She gives us luck in lotteries, love, and marriage;
 I cannot say that she's done much for me yet;
 Not that I mean her bounties to disparage,
 We've not yet clos'd accounts, and we shall see yet
 How much she'll make amends for past miscarriage;
 Meantime the goddess I'll no more importune,
 Unless to thank her when she's made my fortune.

LXIII.

To turn,—and to return;—the devil take it!

This story slips for ever through my fingers,
Because, just as the stanza likes to make it,

It needs must be—and so it rather lingers;
This form of verse began, I can't well break it,

But must keep time and tune like public singers;
But if I once get through my present measure,
I'll take another when I'm next at leisure.

LXIV.

They went to the Ridotto ('tis a place

To which I mean to go myself to-morrow,
Just to divert my thoughts a little space,

Because I'm rather hippish, and may borrow
Some spirits, guessing at what kind of face

May lurk beneath each mask; and as my sorrow
Slackens its pace sometimes, I'll make, or find,
Something shall leave it half an hour behind.)

LXV.

Now Laura moves along the joyous crowd,

Smiles in her eyes, and simpers on her lips;
To some she whispers, others speaks aloud;

To some she curtsies, and to some she dips,
Complains of warmth, and this complaint avow'd,

Her lover brings the lemonade, she sips;
She then surveys, condemns, but pities still
Her dearest friends for being drest so ill.

LXVI.

One has false curls, another too much paint,

A third—where did she buy that frightful turban?

A fourth's so pale she fears she's going to faint,

A fifth's look's vulgar, dowdyish, and suburban,

A sixth's white silk has got a yellow taint,
A seventh's thin muslin surely will be her bane,
And lo! an eighth appears,—“ I'll see no more! ”
For fear, like Banquo's kings, they reach a score.

LXVII.

Meantime, while she was thus at others gazing,
Others were levelling their looks at her ;
She heard the men's half-whispered mode of praising,
And, till 'twas done, determined not to stir ;
The women only thought it quite amazing
That at her time of life so many were
Admirers still,—but men are so debased,
Those brazen creatures always suit their taste.

LXVIII.

For my part, now, I ne'er could understand
Why naughty women——but I won't discuss
A thing which is a scandal to the land ;
I only don't see why it should be thus ;
And if I were but in a gown and band,
Just to entitle me to make a fuss,
I'd preach on this till Wilberforce and Romilly
Should quote in their next speeches from my homily.

LXIX.

While Laura thus was seen and seeing, smiling,
Talking, she knew not why and cared not what,
So that her female friends, with envy broiling,
Beheld her airs and triumph, and all that ;
And well drest males still kept before her filing,
And passing bowed and mingled with her chat ;
More than the rest one person seemed to stare
With pertinacity that's rather rare.

LXX.

He was a Turk, the colour of mahogany ;
 And Laura saw him, and at first was glad,
 Because the Turks so much admire philogyny,
 Although their usage of their wives is sad ;
 'Tis said they use no better than a dog any
 Poor woman, whom they purchase like a pad :
 They have a number, though they ne'er exhibit 'em.
 Four wives by law, and concubines « ad libitum. »

LXXI.

They lock them up, and veil, and guard them daily,
 They scarcely can behold their male relations,
 So that their moments do not pass so gaily
 As is supposed the case with northern nations ;
 Confinement, too, must make them look quite pally :
 And as the Turks abhor long conversations,
 Their days are either past in doing nothing,
 Or bathing, nursing, making love, and clothing.

LXXII.

They cannot read, and so don't lisp in criticism ;
 Nor write, and so they don't affect the muse ;
 Were never caught in epigram or witticism,
 Have no romances, sermons, plays, reviews,—
 In harams learning soon would make a pretty schism !
 But luckily these beauties are no « blues, »
 No bustling Botherbys have they to show 'em
 « That charming passage in the last new poem. »

LXXIII.

No solemn, antique gentleman of rhyme,
 Who having angled all his life for fame,
 And getting but a nibble at a time,
 Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same

Small « Triton of the minnows, » the sublime
 Of mediocrity, the furious tame,
 The echo's echo, usher of the school
 Of female wits, boy bards—in short, a fool!

LXXIV.

A stalking oracle of awful phrase,
 The approving « *Good!* » (by no means GOOD in la
 Humming like flies around the newest blaze,
 The bluest of bluebottles you e'er saw,
 Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,
 Gorging the little fame he gets all raw,
 Translating tongues he knows not even by letter,
 And sweating plays so middling, bad were better.

LXXV.

One hates an author that's *all author*, fellows
 In foolscap uniforms turned up with ink,
 So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous,
 One don't know what to say to them, or think,
 Unless to puff them with a pair of bellows;
 Of coxcombry's worst coxcombs e'en the pink
 Are preferable to these shreds of paper,
 These unquenched snuffings of the midnight taper.

LXXVI.

Of these same we see several, and of others,
 Men of the world, who know the world like men.
 S—tt, R—s, M—re, and all the better brothers,
 Who think of something else besides the pen;
 But for the children of the « mighty mother's, »
 The would-be wits and can't be gentlemen,
 I leave them to their daily « tea is ready, »
 Smug coterie, and literary lady.

LXXVII.

e poor dear Mussulwomen whom I mention
 Have none of these instructive pleasant people,
 And *one* would seem to them a new invention,
 Unknown as bells within a Turkish steeple ;
 Sink 'twould almost be worth while to pension
 Though best-sown projects very often reap ill)
 Missionary author, just to preach
 For Christian usage of the parts of speech.

LXXVIII.

chemistry for them unfolds her gasses,
 No metaphysics are let loose in lectures,
 circulating library amasses
 Religious novels, moral tales, and strictures
 on the living manners, as they pass us ;
 No exhibition glares with annual pictures ;
 they stare not on the stars from out their attics,
 nor deal (thank God for that !) in mathematics.

LXXIX.

Why I thank God for that is no great matter,
 I have my reasons, you no doubt suppose,
 And as, perhaps, they would not highly flatter,
 I'll keep them for my life (to come) in prose ;
 For I have a little turn for satire,
 And yet methinks the older that one grows
 Inclines us more to laugh than scold, though laughter
 Leaves us so doubly serious shortly after.

LXXX.

! mirth and innocence ! Oh ! milk and water !
 Ye happy mixtures of more happy days !
 these sad centuries of sin and slaughter,
 Abominable Man no more allays

His thirst with such pure beverage. No matter,
I love you both, and both shall have my praise :
Oh ! for old Saturn's reign of sugar-candy !—
Meantime I drink to your return in brandy.

LXXXI.

Our Laura's Turk still kept his eyes upon her,
Less in the Mussulman than Christian way,
Which seems to say, " Madam, I do you honour,
And while I please to stare, you'll please to stay."
Could staring win a woman, this had won her,
But Laura could not thus be led astray,
She had stood fire too long and well, to boggle
Even at this stranger's most outlandish ogle.

LXXXII.

The morning now was on the point of breaking,
A turn of time at which I would advise
Ladies who have been dancing, or partaking
In any other kind of exercise,
To make their preparations for forsaking
The ball-room ere the sun begins to rise,
Because when once the lamps and candles fail,
His blushes make them look a little pale.

LXXXIII.

I've seen some balls and revels in my time,
And staid them over for some silly reason,
And then I looked (I hope it was no crime)
To see what lady best stood out the season ;
And though I've seen some thousands in their prime,
Lovely and pleasing, and who still may please on,
I never saw but one (the stars withdrawn),
Whose bloom could after dancing dare the dawn.

LXXXIV.

'he name of this Aurora I'll not mention,
 Although I might, for she was nought to me
 More than that patent work of God's invention,
 A charming woman, whom we like to see ;
 ut writing names would merit reprehension,
 Yet if you like to find out this fair *she*,
 t the next London or Parisian ball
 ou still may mark her check, out-blooming all.

LXXXV.

aura, who knew it would not do at all
 To meet the daylight after seven hours sitting
 mong three thousand people at a ball,
 To make her curtsy thought it right and fitting ;
 he count was at her elbow with her shawl,
 And they the room were on the point of quitting,
 When lo ! those cursed gondoliers had got
 ast in the very place where they *should not*.

LXXXVI.

is this they're like our coachmen, and the cause
 Is much the same—the crowd, and pulling, hauling,
 With blasphemies enough to break their jaws,
 They make a never intermitted bawling.
 t home, our Bow-street gemmen keep the laws,
 And here a sentry stands within your calling ;
 ut, for all that, there is a deal of swearing,
 nd nauseous words past mentioning or bearing.

LXXXVII.

'he count and Laura found their boat at last,
 And homeward floated o'er the silent tide,
 Discussing all the dances gone and past ;
 The dancers and their dresses too, beside ;

Some little scandals eke : but all aghast
 (As to their palace stairs the rowers glide)
 Sate Laura by the side of her adorer,
 When lo ! the Mussulman was there before her.

LXXXVIII.

« Sir, » said the count, with brow exceeding grave,
 « Your unexpected presence here will make
 « It necessary for myself to crave
 « Its import ? But perhaps 'tis a mistake ;
 « I hope it is so ; and at once to wave
 « All compliment, I hope so for *your* sake ;
 « You understand my meaning, or you *shall*. »
 « Sir, » (quoth the Turk) « 'tis no mistake at all ;

LXXXIX.

« That lady is *my wife* ! » Much wonder paints
 The lady's changing cheek, as well it might ;
 But where an Englishwoman sometimes faints,
 Italian females don't do so outright ;
 They only call a little on their saints,
 And then come to themselves, almost or quite ;
 Which saves much hartshorn, salts, and sprinkling faces,
 And cutting stays, as usual in such cases.

XC.

She said,—what could she say ? Why not a word :
 But the count courteously invited in
 The stranger, much appeased by what he heard :
 « Such things perhaps, we'd best discuss within, »
 Said he, « don't let us make ourselves absurd
 « In public, by a scene, nor raise a din,
 « For then the chief and only satisfaction
 « Will be much quizzing on the whole transaction. »

XCI.

They entered, and for coffee called,—it came,
 A beverage for Turks and Christians both,
 Though the way they make it's not the same.
 Now Laura, much recovered, or less loth
 To speak, cries : « Beppo ! what's your pagan name ?
 « Bless me ! your beard is of amazing growth !
 And how came you to keep away so long ?
 Are you not sensible 'twas very wrong ?

XCII.

And are you *really, truly*, now a Turk ?
 « With any other women did you wive ?
 Is't true they use their fingers for a fork ?
 « Well, that's the prettiest shawl—as I'm alive !
 You'll give it me ? They say you eat no pork.
 « And how so many years did you contrive
 To—Bless me ! did I ever ? No, I never
 Saw a man grown so yellow ! How's your liver ?

XCIII.

Beppo ! that beard of yours becomes you not ;
 « It shall be shaved before you're a day older ;
 Why do you wear it ? Oh ! I had forgot—
 « Pray don't you think the weather here is colder ?
 How do I look ? You shan't stir from this spot
 « In that queer dress, for fear that some beholder
 Should find you out, and make the story known.
 How short your hair is ! Lord ! how grey it's grown ! »

XCIV.

That answer Beppo made to these demands,
 Is more than I know. He was cast away
 About where Troy stood once, and nothing stands,
 Became a slave of course, and for his pay

Had bread and bastinadoes, till some bands
Of pirates landing in a neighbouring bay,
He joined the rogues and prospered, and became
A renegado of indifferent fame.

XCV.

But he grew rich, and with his riches grew so
Keen the desire to see his home again,
He thought himself in duty bound to do so,
And not be always thieving on the main;
Lonely he felt, at times, as Robin Crusoe,
And so he hired a vessel come from Spain,
Bound for Corfu; she was a fine polacca,
Manned with twelve hands, and laden with tobacco.

XCVI.

Himself, and much (heaven knows how gotten) cash,
He then embarked, with risk of life and limb,
And got clear off, although the attempt was rash;
He said that *Providence* protected him—
For my part, I say nothing, lest we clash
In our opinions:—well, the ship was trim,
Set sail, and kept her reckoning fairly on,
Except three days of calm when off Cape Bonn.

XCVII.

They reached the island, he transferred his lading,
And self and live-stock, to another bottom,
And pass'd for a true Turkey-merchant, trading
With goods of various names, but I've forgot 'em.
However, he got off by this evading,
Or else the people would perhaps have shot him;
And thus at Venice landed to reclaim
His wife, religion, house, and Christian name.

XCVIII.

His wife received, the patriarch re-baptized him
 (He made the church a present by the way);
 He then threw off the garments which disguised him,
 And borrowed the Count's small-clothes for a day :
 His friends the more for his long absence prized him,
 Finding he'd wherewithal to make them gay,
 With dinners, where he oft became the laugh of them.
 For stories,—but *I* don't believe the half of them.

XCIX.

Whate'er his youth had suffered, his old age
 With wealth and talking made him some amends;
 Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,
 I've heard the Count and he were always friends.
 My pen is at the bottom of a page,
 Which being finished, here the story ends;
 'Tis to be wished it had been sooner done,
 But stories somehow lengthen when begun.

Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
But whispering tongues can poison truth ;
And constancy lives in realms above :
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain :
And to be wroth with one we love ,
Doth work like madness in the brain :

* * * * *

But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining —
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder ;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Coleridge's Christabel.

FARE THEE WELL!

FARE thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well* :
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.
Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er can'st know again :
Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou would'st at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.
Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe—
Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?
Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away :
Still thine own its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead ;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.
And when thou would'st solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say « Father! »
Though his care she must forego?
When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is prest,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd!
Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.
All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know ;
All my hopes , where'er thou goest,
Wither—yet with *thee* they go.
Every feeling hath been shaken ;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now :
But 'tis done—all words are idle—
Words from me are vainer still ;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.—
Fare thee well!—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Seared in heart, and lone, and blighted—
More than this I scarce can die.

DARKNESS.

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless ; and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air ;
Morn came, and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation ; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light :
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons ; cities were consumed,
And men were gathered round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face ;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch :
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd ;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them ; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept ; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled ;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and looked up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,

The pall of a past world ; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd : the wild birds shriek
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings ; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous ; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food :
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again ;—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom : no love was left ;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious ; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh ;
The meagre by the meagre were devoured,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds, and beasts, and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws ; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answered not with a caress—he died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees ; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies ; they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage ; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame

was a mockery ; then they lifted up
eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd, and died—
of their mutual hideousness they died,
wringing who he was upon whose brow
had written Fiend. The world was void,
opulous and the powerful was a lump,
less, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
of death—a chaos of hard clay.
rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
nothing stirred within their silent depths ;
sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
their masts fell down piecemeal ; as they dropp'd
lept on the abyss without a surge—
waves were dead ; the tides were in their grave,
soon their mistress had expired before ;
winds were withered in the stagnant air,
the clouds perish'd ; Darkness had no need
from them—She was the universe.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee ;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me :
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed Ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lulled winds seem dreaming,
And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep ;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep :
So the Spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee ;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's Ocean.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

LORD BYRON'S WORKS.

IV.

PRINTED BY FAIN , PLACE DE L'ODÉON.

LORD BYRON'S WORKS.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

CONTAINING :

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH — MANFRED — MAZEPPA — THE
PRISONER OF CHILLON — THE LAMENT OF TASSO —
VARIOUS POEMS.

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THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.

I

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1

ADVERTISEMENT.

« THE grand army of the Turks (in 1715),
« under the prime vizier, to open to themselves
« a way into the heart of the Morea, and to
« form the siege of Napoli di Romania, the
« most considerable place in all that country (1),
« thought it best in the first place to attack
« Corinth, upon which they made several
« storms. The garrison being weakened, and
« the governor seeing it was impossible to hold
« out against so mighty a force, thought fit to
« beat a parley : but while they were treating
« about the articles, one of the magazines in
« the Turkish camp, wherein they had six hun-
« dred barrels of powder, blew up by acci-
« dent, whereby six or seven hundred men

(1) Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napol is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810-11 ; and in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1809, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different : that by sea has more sameness, but the voyage being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Ægina, Poro, etc., and the coast of the continent.

« were killed : which so enraged the Infidels,
« that they would not grant any capitulation,
« but stormed the place with so much fury,
« that they took it, and put most of the garrison,
« with Signior Minotti, the governor, to the
« sword. The rest, with Antonio Bembo, pro-
« veditor extraordinary, were made prisoners
« of war. » — *History of the Turks*, vol. iij,
p. 151.

THE
SIEGE OF CORINTH.

I.

MANY a vanished year and age,
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
Have swept o'er Corinth ; yet she stands
A fortress formed to Freedom's hands.
The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock,
Have left untouched her hoary rock,
The keystone of a land, which still,
Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,
The land-mark to the double tide
That purpling rolls on either side,
As if their waters chafed to meet,
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
But could the blood before her shed
Since first Timoleon's brother bled,
Or baffled Persia's despot fled,
Arise from out the earth which drank
The stream of slaughter as it sank,
That sanguine Ocean would o'erflow
Her isthmus idly spread below :
Or could the bones of all the slain,
Who perished there, be piled again,

That rival pyramid would rise
More mountain-like, through those clear skies,
Than yon tower-capt Acropolis,
Which seems the very clouds to kiss.

II.

On duu Cithæron's ridge appears
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears;
And downward to the Isthmian plain,
From shore to shore of either main,
The tent is pitched, the crescent shines
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines;
And the dusk Spahi's bands advance
Beneath each bearded pasha's glance;
And far and wide as eye can reach
The turbaned cohorts throng the beach;
And there the Arab's camel kneels,
And there his steed the Tartar wheels;
The Turcoman hath left his herd',
The sabre round his loins to gird;
And there the volleying thunders pour,
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
Wings the far hissing globe of death;
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball;
And from that wall the foe replies,
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
With fires that answer fast and well
The summons of the Infidel.

III.

But near and nearest to the wall
Of those who wish and work its fall,

With deeper skill in war's black art
Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
As any chief that ever stood
Triumphant in the fields of blood,
From post to post, and deed to deed,
Fast spurring on his reeking steed
Where sallying ranks the trench assail,
And make the foremost Moslem quail;
Or where the battery, guarded well,
Remains as yet impregnable,
Alighting cheerly to inspire
The soldier slackening in his fire;
The first and freshest of the host
Which Stamboul's sultan there can boast,
To guide the follower o'er the field,
To point the tube, the lance to wield,
Or whirl around the bickering blade;—
Was Alp, the Adrian renegade!

IV.

From Venice—once a race of worth
His gentle sires—he drew his birth;
But late an exile from her shore,
Against his countrymen he bore
The arms they taught to bear; and now
The turban girt his shaven brow.
Through many a change had Corinth passed
With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
And here, before her walls, with those
To Greece and Venice equal foes,
He stood a foe, with all the zeal
Which young and fiery converts feel,
Within whose heated bosom throngs
The memory of a thousand wrongs.

To him had Venice ceased to be
Her ancient civic boast—"the Free;"
And in the palace of St. Mark
Unnamed accusers in the dark
Within the "Lion's mouth" had placed
A charge against him uneffaced:
He fled in time, and saved his life,
To waste his future years in strife,
That taught his land how great her loss
In him who triumphed o'er the Cross,
'Gainst which he reared the Crescent high,
And battled to avenge or die.

V.

Coumourgi^a—he whose closing scene
Adorned the triumph of Eugene,
When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,
The last and mightiest of the slain,
He sank, regretting not to die,
But curst the Christian's victory—
Coumourgi—can his glory cease,
That latest conqueror of Greece,
Till Christian hands to Greece restore
The freedom Venice gave of yore?
A hundred years have rolled away
Since he refixed the Moslem's sway;
And now he led the Mussulman,
And gave the guidance of the van
To Alp, who well repaid the trust
By cities levelled with the dust;
And proved, by many a deed of deat,
How firm his heart in novel faith.

VI.

The walls grew weak ; and fast and hot
Against them poured the ceaseless shot,
With unabating fury sent
From battery to battlement ;
And thunder-like the pealing din
Rose from each heated culverin ;
And here and there some crackling dome
Was fired before the exploding bomb :
And as the fabric sank beneath
The shattering shell's volcanic breath,
In red and wreathing columns flashed
The flame, as loud the ruin crashed,
Or into countless meteors driven,
Its earth-stars melted into heaven ;
Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,
Impervious to the hidden sun,
With volumed smoke that slowly grew
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

VII.

But not for vengeance, long delayed,
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
The Moslem warriors sternly teach
His skill to pierce the promised breach :
Within these walls a maid was pent
His hope would win, without consent
Of that inexorable sire,
Whose heart refused him in its ire,
When Alp, beneath his Christian name,
Her virgin hand aspired to claim.

In happier mood, and earlier time,
While unimpeached for traitorous crime,
Gayest in gondola or hall,
He glittered through the Carnival;
And tuned the softest serenade
That e'er on Adria's waters played
At midnight to Italian maid.

VIII.

And many deemed her heart was won;
For sought by numbers, given to none,
Had young Francesca's hand remained
Still by the church's bonds unchained ;
And when the Adriatic bore
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail,
And pensive waxed the maid and pale;
More constant at confessional,
More rare at masque and festival;
Or seen at such with downcast eyes,
Which conquered hearts they ceased to prize :
With listless look she seems to gaze ;
With humbler care her form arrays ;
Her voice less lively in the song ;
Her step, though light, less fleet among
The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

IX.

Sent by the state to guard the land,
(Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
While Sobieski tamed his pride
By Buda's wall and Danube's side,

The chiefs of Venice wrung away
 From Patra to Eubœa's bay,)
 Minotti held in Corinth's towers
 The Doge's delegated powers,
 While yet the pitying eye of Peace
 Smiled o'er her long forgotten Greece :
 And here that faithless truce was broke
 Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,
 With him his gentle daughter came;
 Nor there, since Menelaus' dame
 Forsook her lord and land, to prove
 What woes await on lawless love,
 Had fairer form adorned the shore
 Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

X.

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn;
 And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,
 O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
 The foremost of the fierce assault.
 The bands are ranked; the chosen van
 Of Tartar, and of Mussulman,
 The full of hope, misnamed a fortune, who
 Who hold the thought of death in scorn,
 And win their way with falchion's force,
 Or pave the path with many a corse,
 O'er which the following brave may rise,
 Their stepping-stone—the last who dies!

XI.

'Tis midnight : on the mountain's brown
 The cold, round moon shines deeply down;

Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
 Spreads like an Ocean hung on high,
 Bespangled with those isles of light,
 So wildly, spiritually bright;
 Who ever gazed upon them shining,
 And turned to earth without repining,
 Nor wished for wings to flee away,
 And mix with their eternal ray?
 The waves on either shore lay there
 Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
 And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
 But murmured meekly, as the brook.
 The winds were pillowed on the waves;
 The banners drooped along their staves,
 And, as they fell around them furling,
 Above them shone the crescent curling;
 And that deep silence was unbroke,
 Save where the watch his signal spoke,
 Save where the steed neighed oft and shrill,
 And echo answered from the hill,
 And the wide hum of that wild host
 Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,
 As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
 In midnight call to grunted prayer;
 It rose, that chanted mournful strain,
 Like some lone spirit's wail on the plain:
 'Twas musical, but sadly sweet,
 Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,
 And take a long unmeasured tone,
 To mortal minstrelsy unknown.
 It seemed to those within the wall
 A cry prophetic of their fall:
 It struck even the besieger's ear
 With something ominous and drear,

An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed
Of that strange sense its silence framed;
Such as a sudden passing-bell
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

XH.

The tent of Alp was on the shore ;
The sound was hushed, the prayer was o'er ;
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obeyed :
'Tis but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite
With all revenge and love can pay,
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter ; but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.
He stood alone among the host ;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the crescent o'er the cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,
Secure in paradise to be
By Houris loved immortally :
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,
The stern exaltedness of zeal,
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,
When battling on the parent soil.
He stood alone—a renegade
Against the country he betrayed ;
He stood alone amidst his band,
Without a trusted heart or hand :

They followed him, for he was brave,
 And great the spoil he got and gave;
 They crouched to him, for he had skill
 To warp and wield the vulgar will :
 But still his Christian origin
 With them was little less than sin.
 They envied even the faithless fame
 He earned beneath a Moslem name ;
 Since he, their mightiest chief, had been
 In youth a bitter Nazarene.
 They did not know how pride can stoop,
 When baffled feelings withering droop ;
 They did not know how hate can burn
 In hearts once changed from soft to stern ;
 Nor all the false and fatal zeal
 The convert of revenge can feel.
 He ruled them—man may rule the worst,
 By ever daring to be first :
 So lions o'er the jackal sway ;
 The jackal points, he fells the prey,
 Then on the vulgar yelling press,
 To gorge the relics of success.

XIII.

His head grows fevered, and his pulse
 The quick successive throbs convulse ;
 In vain from side to side he throws
 His form, in courtship of repose ;
 Or if he dozed, a sound, a start
 Awoke him with a sunken heart.
 The turban on his hot brow pressed,
 The mail weighed lead-like on his breast,
 Though oft and long beneath its weight
 Upon his eyes had slumber sate,

Without or couch or canopy,
Except a rougher field or sky
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
Than now along the heaven was spread.
He could not rest, he could not stay
Within his tent to wait for day,
But walked him forth along the sand,
Where thousand sleepers strewed the strand.
What pillowed them? and why should he
More wakeful than the humblest be?
Since more their peril, worse their toil,
And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
While he alone, where thousands passed
A night of sleep, perchance their last,
In sickly vigil wandered on,
And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV.

He felt his soul become more light
Beneath the freshness of the night.
Cool was the silent sky, though calm,
And bathed his brow with airy balm;
Behind, the camp—before him lay,
In many a winding creek and bay,
Lepanto's gulf : and, on the brow
Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,
High and eternal, such as shone
Through thousand summers brightly gone
Along the gulf, the mount, the clime;
It will not melt, like man, to time :
Tyrant and slave are swept away,
Less formed to wear before the ray,
But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,

While tower and tree are torn and rent,
Shines o'er its craggy battlement;
In form a peak, in height a cloud,
In texture like a hovering shroud,
Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
As from her fond abode she fled,
And lingered on the spot where long
Her prophet spirit spake in song.
Oh ! still her step at moments falters
O'er withered fields and ruined altars,
And fain would wake in souls too broken,
By pointing to each glorious token.
But vain her voice, till better days
Dawn in those yet remembered rays
Which shone upon the Persian flying,
And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV.

Not mindless of these mighty times
Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes;
And through this night, as on he wandered,
And o'er the past and present pondered,
And thought upon the glorious dead
Who there in better cause had bled,
He felt how faint and feebly dim
The fame that could accrue to him,
Who cheered the band, and waved the sword,
A traitor in a turbaned horde;
And led them to the lawless siege,
Whose best success were sacrilege.
Not so had those his fancy numbered
The chiefs whose dust around him slumbered;
Their phalanx marshalled on the plain,
Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.

They fell devoted, but undying ;
The very gale their names seemed sighing :
The waters murmured of their name ;
The woods were peopled with their fame ;
The silent pillar, lone and gray,
Claimed kindred with their sacred clay ;
Their spirits wrapt the dusky mountain,
Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain ;
The meanest rill, the mightiest river,
Rolled mingling with their fame for ever.
Despite of every yoke she bears,
That land is glory's still and theirs !
'Tis still a watch-word to the earth :
When man would do a deed of worth
He points to Greece, and turns to tread,
So sanctioned, on the tyrant's head :
He looks to her, and rushes on
Where life is lost, or freedom won.

XVI.

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
And wooed the freshness Night diffused.
There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea, ³
Which changeless rolls eternally ;
So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,
Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood ;
And the powerless moon beholds them flow,
Heedless if she come or go :
Calm or high, in main or bay,
On their course she hath no sway.
The rock unworn its base doth bare,
And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there ;
And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,
On the line that it left long ages ago :

A smooth short space of yellow sand
Between it and the greener land.
He wandered on, along the beach,
Till within the range of a carbine's reach
Of the leaguered wall; but they saw him not;
Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot?
Did traitors lurk in the Christians' hold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts waxed cold?
I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall
There flashed no fire, and there hissed no ball,
Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flanked the sea-ward gate of the town;
Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell
The sullen words of the sentinel,
As his measured step on the stone below
Clanked, as he paced it to and fro;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival,
Gorging and growling o'er carcase and limb;
They were too busy to bark at him!
From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull, ⁴
As it slipped through their jaws when their edge grew
dull,
As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed;
So well had they broken a lingering fast
With those who had fallen for that night's repast.
And Alp knew, by the turbans that rolled on the sand,
The foremost of these were the best of his band:
Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,
And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair, ⁵
All the rest was shaven and bare.

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.

The scalps were in the wild dogs maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.
But close by the shore on the edge of the gulf,
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey ;
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Picked by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

XVII.

Alp turned him from the sickening sight :
Never had shaken his nerves in fight ;
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorched with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.
There is something of pride in the perilous hour,
Whate'er be the shape in which death may lower ;
For Fame is there to say who bleeds,
And Honour's eye on daring deeds !
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead,
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there ;
All regarding man as their prey,
All rejoicing in his decay.

XVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashioned by long forgotten hands ;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown !

Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before!
Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be
What we have seen, our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have passed away,
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay!

XIX.

He satc him down at a pillar's base,
And passed his hand athwart his face;
Like one in dreary musing mood,
Declining was his attitude;
His head was drooping on his breast,
Fevered, throbbing, and opprest;
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
Oft his beating fingers went,
Hurriedly, as you may see
Your own run over the ivory key,
Ere the measured tone is taken
By the chords you would awaken.
There he sate all heavily,
As he heard the night-wind sigh.
Was it the wind, through some hollow stone⁶,
Sent that soft and tender moan?
He lifted his head, and he looked on the sea,
But it was unrippled as glass may be;
He looked on the long grass—it waved not a blade;
How was that gentle sound conveyed?
He looked to the banners—each flag lay still,
So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill,
And he felt not a breath come over his cheek;
What did that sudden sound bespeak?

He turned to the left—is he sure of sight?
There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX.

He started up with more of fear
Than if an armed foe were near.
“ God of my fathers! what is here?
“ Who art thou, and wherefore sent
“ So near a hostile armament? ”
His trembling hands refused to sign
The cross he deemed no more divine :
He had resumed it in that hour,
But conscience wrung away the power.
He gazed, he saw : he knew the face
Of beauty, and the form of grace ;
It was Francesca by his side,
The maid who might have been his bride!

The rose was yet upon her cheek,
But mellowed with a tenderer streak :
Where was the play of her soft lips fled?
Gone was the smile that enlivened their red.
The Ocean’s calm within their view,
Beside her eye had less of blue ;
But like that cold wave it stood still,
And its glance, though clear, was chill.
Around her form a thin robe twining,
Nought concealed her bosom shining ;
Through the parting of her hair,
Floating darkly downward there,
Her rounded arm showed white and bare :
And ere yet she made reply,
Once she raised her hand on high ;

It was so wan, and transparent of hue,
You might have seen the moon shine through.

XXI.

- « I come from my rest to him I love best,
- « That I may be happy, and he may be blest.
- « I have passed the guards, the gate, the wall;
- « Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
- « 'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
- « From a maid in the pride of her purity;
- « And the power on high, that can shield the good
- « Thus from the tyrant of the wood,
- « Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well
- « From the hands of the leaguering Infidel.
- « I come—and if I come in vain,
- « Never, oh never, we meet again!
- « Thou hast done a fearful deed
- « In falling away from thy father's creed :
- « But dash that turban to earth, and sign
- « The sign of the cross; and for ever be mine;
- « Wring the black drop from thy heart,
- « And to-morrow unites us no more to part. »

- « And where should our bridal couch be spread?
- « In the midst of the dying and the dead?
- « For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame
- « The sons and the shrines of the Christian name.
- « None, save thou and thine, I've sworn,
- « Shall be left upon the morn :
- « But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,
- « Where our hands shall be joined, and our sorrow forgot
- « There thou yet shalt be my bride,
- « When once again I've quelled the pride

« Of Venice; and her hated race
« Have felt the arm they would debase
« Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
« Whom vice and envy made my foes. »

Upon his hand she laid her own—
Light was the touch, but it thrilled to the bone,
And shot a chillness to his heart,
Which fixed him beyond the power to start.
Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,
He could not loose him from its hold;
But never did clasp of one so dear
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,
As those thin fingers, long and white,
Froze through his blood by their touch that night.
The feverish glow of his brow was gone,
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,
As he looked on the face, and beheld its hue
So deeply changed from what he knew :
Fair but faint—without the ray
Of mind, that made each feature play
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day;
And her motionless lips lay still as death,
And her words came forth without her breath,
And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,
And there seemed not a pulse in her veins to dwell.
Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fixed,
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmixed
With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream;
Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare,
Stirred by the breath of the wintry air,
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight;

As they seem, through the dimness, about to come down
 From the shadowy wall where their images frown;
 Fearfully flitting to and fro,
 As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

« If not for love of me be given
 « Thus much, then, for the love of heaven,—
 « Again I say—that turban tear
 « From off thy faithless brow, and swear
 « Thine injured country's sons to spare,
 « Or thou art lost; and never shalt see
 « Not earth—that's past—but heaven or me.
 « If this thou dost accord, albeit
 « A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet,
 « That doom shall half absolve thy sin,
 « And mercy's gate may receive thee within :
 « But pause one moment more, and take
 « The curse of him thou didst forsake;
 « And look once more to heaven, and see
 « Its love for ever shut from thee.
 « There is a light cloud by the moon—'
 « 'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—
 « If, by the time its vapoury sail
 « Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,
 « Thy heart within thee is not changed,
 « Then God and man are both avenged;
 « Dark will thy doom be, darker still
 « Thine immortality of ill. »

Alp looked to heaven, and saw on high
 The sign she spake of in the sky;
 But his heart was swollen, and turned aside,
 By deep interminable pride.

This first false passion of his breast
 Rolled like a torrent o'er the rest.
He sue for mercy! *He* dismayed
 By wild words of a timid maid!
He, wronged by Venice, vow to save
 Her sons, devoted to the grave!
 No—though that cloud were thunder's worst,
 And charged to crush him—let it burst!
 He looked upon it earnestly,
 Without an accent of reply;
 He watched it passing; it is flown:
 Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
 And thus he spake—« Whate'er my fate,
 « I am no changeling—'tis too late :
 « The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
 « Then rise again ; the tree must shiver.
 « What Venice made me, I must be,
 « Her foe in all, save love to thee :
 « But thou art safe : oh ! fly with me ! »
 He turned, but she is gone !
 Nothing is there but the column stone.
 Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air ?
 He saw not, he knew not ; but nothing is there.

XXII.

The night is past, and shines the sun
 As if that morn were a jocund one.
 Lightly and brightly breaks away
 The Morning from her mantle grey,
 And the Noon will look on a sultry day.
 Hark to the trump, and the drum,
 And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
 And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,

* * * *

And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
 And the clash, and the shout, ' they come, they come !'
 The horsetails⁸ are plucked from the ground, and the sword
 From its sheath ; and they form, and but wait for the word.
 Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman,
 Strike your tents, and throng to the van ;
 Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
 That the fugitive may flee in vain,
 When he breaks from the town ; and none escape,
 Aged or young, in the Christian shape ;
 While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
 Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.
 The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein ;
 Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane ;
 White is the foam of their champ on the bit :
 The spears are uplifted ; the matches are lit ;
 The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
 And crush the wall they have crumbled before :
 Forms in his phalanx each Janizar ;
 Alp at their head ; his right arm is bare,
 So is the blade of his scimitar ;
 The khan and the pachas are all at their post ;
 The vizier himself at the head of the host.
 When the culverin's signal is fired, then on ;
 Leave not in Corinth a living one—
 A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
 A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.
 God and the prophet—Alla Hu !
 Up to the skies with that wild halloo !
 « There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to scale ;
 « And your hands on your sabres, and how should ye fail ?
 « He who first downs with the red cross may crave
 « His heart's dearest wish ; let him ask it, and have ! »

Thus uttered Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier;
The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear,
And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire :—
Silence—hark to the signal——fire!

XXIII.

As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die :
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent;
Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,
Strewed the earth like broken glass,
Shivered by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more :
Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levelled plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

XXIV.

As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash
Huge fragments, sapped by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft renewed
Charge of the Moslem multitude:

In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heaped, by the host of the Infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot :
Nothing there, save Death, was mute ;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes ;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice,
Which pierces the deep hills through and through
With an echo dread and new :
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara ;
(We have heard the hearers say,)
Even unto Piræus bay.

XXV.

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt.
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after carnage done.
Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plundered dome :
Hark to the haste of flying feet,
That splash in the blood of the slippery street ;
But here and there, where 'vantage ground
Against the foe may still be found,
Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
Make a pause, and turn again—
With banded backs against the wall,
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall.

There stood an old man—his hairs were white,
But his veteran arm was full of might :
So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,
The dead before him, on that day,
In a semicircle lay ;
Still he combated unwounded,
Though retreating, unsurrounded.
Many a scar of former fight
Lurked beneath his corslet bright ;
But of every wound his body bore
Each and all had been ta'en before :
Though aged he was, so iron of limb,
Few of our youth could cope with him ;
And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,
Outnumbered his thin hairs of silver gray.
From right to left his sabre swept :
Many an Othman mother wept
Sons that were unborn, when dipped
His weapon first in Moslem gore,
Ere his years could count a score.
Of all he might have been the sire
Who fell that day beneath his ire :
For, sonless left long years ago,
His wrath made many a childless foe ;
And since the day, when in the strait
His only boy had met his fate,
His parent's iron hand did doom
More than a human hecatomb.
If shades by carnage be appeased,
Patroclus' spirit less was pleased
Than his Minotti's son, who died
Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.
Buried he lay, where thousands before
For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore :

What of them is left, to tell
Where they lie, and how they fell?
Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves;
But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI.

Hark to the Allah shout! a band
Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand :
Their leader's nervous arm is bare,
Swifter to smite, and never to spare—
Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on
Thus in the fight is he ever known :
Others a gaudier garb may show,
To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe ;
Many a hand's on a richer hilt,
But none on a steel more ruddily gilt ;
Many a loftier turban may wear,—
Alp is but known by the white arm bare ;
Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there!
There is not a standard on that shore
So well advanced the ranks before ;
There is not a banner in Moslem war
Will lure the Delhis half so far ;
It glances like a falling star!
Where'er that mighty arm is seen,
The bravest be, or late have been ;
There the craven cries for quarter
Vainly to the vengeful Tartar ;
Or the hero, silent lying,
Scorns to yield a groan in dying ;
Mustering his last feeble blow
'Gainst the nearest levelled foe,
Though faint beneath the mutual wound,
Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII.

Still the old man stood erect,
And Alp's career a moment checked.

« Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,
« For thine own, thy daughter's sake. »

« Never, renegado, never !
« Though the life of thy gift would last for ever. »

« Francesca!—O my promised bride !
« Must she too perish by thy pride? »

« She is safe. »—« Where? where? »—« In heaven;
« From whence thy traitor soul is driven—
« Far from thee, and undefiled. »

Grimly then Minotti smiled;
As he saw Alp staggering bow
Before his words, as with a blow.

« Oh God! when died she? »—« Yesternight—
« Nor weep I for her spirit's flight :
« None of my pure race shall be
« Slaves to Mahomet and thee—
« Come on! »—That challenge is in vain—
Alp's already with the slain!

While Minotti's words were wreaking
More revenge in bitter speaking
Than his falchion's point had found,
Had the time allowed to wound,
From within the neighbouring porch
Of a long defended church,
Where the last and desperate few
Would the failing fight renew,
The sharp shot dashed Alp to the ground;
Ere an eye could view the wound

That crashed through the brain of the infidel,
Round he spun, and down he fell;
A flash like fire within his eyes
Blazed, as he bent no more to rise,
And then eternal darkness sunk
Through all the palpitating trunk;
Nought of life left, save a quivering
Where his limbs were slightly shivering:
They turned him on his back; his breast
And brow were stained with gore and dust,
And through his lips the life-blood oozed,
From its deep veins lately loosed;
But in his pulse there was no throb,
Nor on his lips one dying sob;
Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
Heralded his way to death:
Ere his very thought could pray,
Unannealed he passed away,
Without a hope from mercy's aid,—
To the last a renegade.

XXVIII.

Fearfully the yell arose
Of his followers, and his foes;
These in joy, in fury those:
Then again in conflict mixing,
Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,
Interchanged the blow and thrust,
Hurling warriors in the dust.
Street by street, and foot by foot,
Still Minotti dares dispute
The latest portion of the land
Left beneath his high command;

With him, aiding heart and hand,
The remnant of his gallant band.
Still the church is tenable,
 Whence issued late the fated hall
 That half avenged the city's fall,
When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell :
Thither bending sternly back,
They leave before a bloody track;
And, with their faces to the foe,
Dealing wounds with every blow,
The chief, and his retreating train,
Join to those within the fane :
There they yet may breathe awhile,
Sheltered by the massy pile.

XXIX.

Brief breathing-time ! the turbaned host,
With added ranks and raging boast,
Press onwards with such strength and heat,
Their numbers balk their own retreat ;
For narrow the way that led to the spot
Where still the Christians yielded not ;
And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try
Through the massy column to turn and fly ;
They perforce must do or die.
They die ; but ere their eyes could close,
Avengers o'er their bodies rose ;
Fresh and furious, fast they fill
The ranks unthinned, though slaughtered still ;
And faint the weary Christians wax
Before the still renewed attacks :
And now the Othmans gain the gate ;
Still resists its iron weight,

And still, all deadly aimed and hot,
From every crevice comes the shot;
From every shattered window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower :
But the portal wavering grows and weak—
The iron yields, the hinges creak—
It bends—it falls—and all is o'er ;
Lost Corinth may resist no more !

XXX.

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar stone :
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above,
With eyes of light and looks of love ;
And placed upon that holy shrine
To fix our thoughts on things divine,
When pictured there, we kneeling see
Her, and the boy-God on her knee,
Smiling sweetly on each prayer
To heaven, as if to waft it there.
Still she smiled ; even now she smiles,
Though slaughter streams along her aisles :
Minotti lifted his aged eye,
And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
Then seized a torch which blazed thereby ;
And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,
Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

XXXI.

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone
Contained the dead of ages gone ;

Their names were on the graven floor,
But now illegible with gore ;
The carved crests, and curious hues
The varied marble's veins diffuse,
Were smeared, and slippery—stained, and strown
White broken swords, and helms o'erthrown :
There were dead above, and the dead below
Lay cold in many a confined row ;
You might see them piled in sable state,
By a pale light through a gloomy grate ;
But War had entered their dark caves,
And stored along the vaulted graves
Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
In masses by the fleshless dead :
Here, throughout the siege, had been
The Christian's chiefest magazine ;
To these a late formed train now led,
Minotti's last and stern resource
Against the foes o'erwhelming force.

XXXII.

The foe came on, and few remain
To strive, and those must strive in vain :
For lack of further lives, to slake
The thirst of vengeance now awake,
With barbarous blows they gash the dead,
And lop the already lifeless head,
And fell the statues from their niche,
And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,
And from each other's rude hands wrest
The silver vessels saints had blessed.
To the high altar on they go ;
Oh ! but it made a glorious show !

On its table still behold
The cup of consecrated gold ;
Massy and deep, a glittering prize,
Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes :
That morn it held the holy wine,
Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,
Which his worshippers drank at the break of day,
To shrive their souls ere they joined in the fray.
Still a few drops within it lay ;
And round the sacred table glow
Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
From the purest metal cast ;
A spoil—the richest, and the last,

XXXIII.

So near they came, the nearest stretched
To grasp the spoil he almost reached,
When old Minotti's hand
Touched with the torch the train—
'Tis fired !
Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,
The turbaned victors, the Christian band,
All that of living or dead remain,
Hurled on high with the shivered fane,
In one wild roar expired !
The shattered town—the walls thrown down—
The waves a moment backward bent—
The hills that shake, although unrent,
As if an earthquake passed—
The thousand shapeless things all driven
In cloud and flame athwart the heaven
By that tremendous blast—
Proclaimed the desperate conflict o'er
On that too long afflicted shore :

Up to the sky like rockets go
All that mingled there below :
Many a tall and goodly man,
Scorched and shrivelled to a span,
When he fell to earth again
Like a cinder strewed the plain :
Down the ashes shower like rain ;
Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles
With a thousand circling wrinkles ;
Some fell on the shore, but, far away,
Scattered o'er the isthmus lay ;
Christian or Moslem, which be they ?
Let their mothers see and say !
When in cradled rest they lay,
And each nursing mother smiled
On the sweet sleep of her child,
Little deemed she such a day
Would rend those tender limbs away.
Not the matrons that them bore
Could discern their offspring more ;
That one moment left no trace
More of human form or face,
Save a scattered scalp or bone :
And down came blazing rafters, strown
Around, and many a falling stone,
Deeply dinted in the clay,
All blackened there and reeking lay.
All the living things that heard
That deadly earth shock disappeared :
The wild birds flew ; the wild dogs fled,
And howling left the unburied dead ;
The camels from their keepers broke ;
The distant steer forsook the yoke—

The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
And burst his girth, and tore his rein ;
The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,
Deep-mouthed arose, and doubly harsh ;
The wolves yelled on the caverned hill,
Where echo rolled in thunder still ;
The jackal's troop, in gathered cry,¹⁰
Bayed from afar complainingly,
With a mixed and mournful sound,
Like crying babe and beaten hound :
With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,
The eagle left his rocky nest,
And mounted nearer to the sun,
The clouds beneath him seemed so dun ;
Their smoke assailed his startled beak,
And made him higher soar and shriek—
Thus was Corinth lost and won !

NOTES.

Note 1, page 6, line 17.

The Turcoman hath left his herd.

The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal : they dwell in tents.

Note 2, page 8, line 13.

Coumourgi—he whose closing scene.

Ali Comourgi, the favourite of three sultans, and grand vizier to Achmet III, after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin, (in the plain of Carlowitz) in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of general Breuner, and some other German prisoners ; and his last words, « Oh that I « could thus serve all the Christian dogs ! » a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption : on being told that prince Eugene, then opposed to him, « was a great general, » he said, « I shall become a greater, and at his expense. »

Note 3, page 17, line 21.

There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea.

The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.

Note 4, page 18, line 23.

And their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull.

This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople; in the little cavities

worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's Travels. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.

Note 5, page 18, line 32.

And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair.

This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mahomet will draw them into Paradise by it.

Note 6, page 20, line 23.

Was it the wind, through some hollow stone.

I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr. Coleridge, called « Christabel. » It was not till after these lines were written that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited; and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr. Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr. Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, of which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges.

Note 7, page 24, line 20.

There is a light cloud by the moon—

I have been told that the idea expressed from lines 19 to 25 has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original—at least not mine; it may be found much better expressed in pages 182-3-4 of the English version of « Vathek » (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification.

Note 8, page 26, line 3.

The horsetails are plucked from the ground, and the sword.

The horsetail, fixed upon a lance, a Pasha's standard.

Note 9, page 29, line 25.

And since the day, when in the strait.

In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and the Turks.

Note 10, page 38, line 7.

The jackal's troop, in gathered cry.

I believe I have taken a poetical licence to transplant the jackal from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They haunt ruins, and follow armies.



MANFRED,
A DRAMATIC POEM.

« There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
« Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. »

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MANFRED.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

MANUEL.

HERMAN.

WITCH OF THE ALPS.

ARIMANES.

NEMESIS.

The DESTINIES.

SPIRITS, etc.

*The Scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps—
partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the
Mountains.*

MANFRED.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

MANFRED *alone.*

(Scene, a Gothic gallery—Time, Midnight.)

MANFRED.

THE lamp must be replenish'd, but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch :
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not : in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within ; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the wise ;
Sorrow is knowledge : they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth :
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essayed, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself—

But they avail not : I have done men good,
 And I have met with good even among men—
 But this avail'd not : I have had my foes,
 And none have baffled, many fallen before me—
 But this avail'd not :—Good, or evil, life,
 Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
 Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
 Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
 And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
 Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
 Or lurking love of something on the earth.—
 Now to my task.—

Mysterious agency !

Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe !
 Whom I have sought in darkness and in light—
 Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell
 In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops
 Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,
 And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things—
 I call upon ye by the written charm
 Which gives me power upon you——Rise ! appear !
(A pause.)

They come not yet.—Now by the voice of him
 Who is the first among you—by this sign,
 Which makes you tremble—by the claims of him
 Who is undying,—Rise ! appear !——Appear !
(A pause.)

If it be so—Spirits of earth and air,
 Ye shall not thus elude me : by a power,
 Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
 Which had its birth-place in a star condemn'd,
 The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,
 A wandering hell in the eternal space ;
 By the strong curse which is upon my soul,

he thought which is within me and around me,
do compel ye to my will.—Appear !

(A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery ; it is stationary ; and a voice is heard singing.)

FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal ! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sun-set gilds
With the azure and vermillion
Which is mix'd for my pavilion ;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden ;
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd !

Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains,
They crowned him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The avalanche in his hand ;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day ;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his cavern'd base—
And what with me would'st *Thou* ?

MANFRED.

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells,
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells ;
O'er my calm hall of coral
The deep echo roll'd :
To the spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold !

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake
Lies pillow'd on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen
Rise boilingly higher ;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,
As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth ;
I have quitted my birth-place,
Thy bidding to bide—
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide !

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the rider of the wind,
The stirrer of the storm ;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm ;

To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast:
The fleet I met sailed well, and yet
'Twill sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny,
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:
It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun 'in air;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe;
Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky!
And thou, beneath its influence born—
Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn—
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend
And parley with a thing like thee—
What would'st thou, Child of Clay! with me?

THE SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!
Before thee at thy quest their spirits are—
What would'st thou with us, son of mortals—say?

MANFRED.

Forgetfulness——

FIRST SPIRIT.

Of what—of whom—and why?

MANFRED.

Of that which is within me; read it there—
Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

SPIRIT.

We can but give thee that which we possess :
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign
Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators, each and all,
These shall be thine.

MANFRED.

Oblivion, self-oblivion—
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?

SPIRIT.

It is not in our essence, in our skill ;
But—thou may'st die.

MANFRED.

Will Death bestow it on me?

SPIRIT.

We are immortal, and do not forge ;
We are eternal ; and to us the past
Is, as the future, present. Art thou answered ?

MANFRED.

Ye mock me—but the power which brought ye here
Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will !
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,
The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far-darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay !
Answer, or I will teach ye what I am.

SPIRIT.

We answer as we answered ; our reply
Is even in thine own words.

MANFRED.

Why say ye so ?

SPIRIT.

If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,
We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call Death hath nought to do with us.

MANFRED.

I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain ;
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

SPIRIT.

Say ;

What we possess we offer ; it is thine :
Bethink ere thou dismiss us ; ask again—
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days——

Accursed ! what have I to do with days ?
They are too long already.—Hence—begone !

SPIRIT.

Yet pause : being here, our will would do thee service ;
Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes ?

MANFRED.

No, none : yet stay—one moment, ere we part—
I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As music on the waters ; and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star,
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

SPIRIT.

We have no forms beyond the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle :
But choose a form—in that we will appear.

MANFRED.

I have no choice ; there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting—Come !

SEVENTH SPIRIT (*Appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure.*)

Behold !

MANFRED.

Oh God ! if it be thus, and *thou*
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy.—I will clasp thee,
And we again will be——

(*The figure vanishes.*)

My heart is crush'd !

(*MANFRED falls senseless.*)

(*A VOICE is heard in the incantation which follows.*)

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass ;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep ;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish ;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone ;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gathered in a cloud ;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been ;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse ;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare ;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice ;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky ;
And the Day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill ;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring ;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake ;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm ;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee ! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell !

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial ;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny ;
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear ;
Lo ! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee ;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither !

SCENE II.

The Mountain of the Jung-frau.—Time, Morning.—
MANFRED alone upon the cliffs.

MANFRED.

The spirits I have raised abandon me—
The spells which I have studied baffle me—
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me ;
I lean no more on super-human aid,
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,
It is not of my search.—My mother Earth !

And thou, fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;
I see the perils—yet do not recede;
And my brain reels— and yet my foot is firm:
There is a power upon me which withholds
And makes it my fatality to live;
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself—
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,

(*An eagle passes.*)

Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself;
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit

To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
 A conflict of its elements, and breathe
 The breath of degradation and of pride,
 Contending with low wants and lofty will,
 Till our mortality predominates,
 And men are—what they name not to themselves,
 And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,

(*The shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*)

The natural music of the mountain reed—
 For here the patriarchal days are not
 A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
 Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
 My soul would drink those echoes.—Oh! that I were
 The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
 A living voice, a breathing harmony,
 A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying
 With the blest tone which made me!

(*Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.*)

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Even so

This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet
 Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce
 Repay my break-neck travail—What is here?
 Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd
 A height which none even of our mountaineers,
 Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb
 Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
 Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance.—
 I will approach him nearer.

MANFRED (*not perceiving the other.*)

To be thus—

Grey-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,

Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,
 A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
 Which but supplies a feeling to decay—
 And to be thus, eternally but thus,
 Having been otherwise! Now furrow'd o'er
 With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, not by years;
 And hours—all tortured into ages—hours
 Which I outlive!—Ye toppling crags of ice!
 Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down
 In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
 I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,
 Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,
 And only fall on things which still would live;
 On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
 And hamlet of the harmless villager.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

The mists begin to rise from up the valley;
 I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
 To lose at once his way and life together.

MANFRED.

The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
 Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
 Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,
 Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
 Heaped with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

I must approach him cautiously; if near,
 A sudden step will startle him, and he
 Seems tottering already.

MANFRED:

Mountains have fallen;
 Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
 Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
 The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;
 Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
 Which crush'd the waters into mist, and made
 Their fountains find another channel—thus,
 Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—
 Why stood I not beneath it?

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Friend! have a care,
 Your next step may be fatal!—for the love
 Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

MANFRED (*not hearing him.*)

Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;
 My bones had then been quiet in their depth;
 They had not then been strewn upon the rocks
 For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—
 In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens
 Look not upon me thus reproachfully—
 Ye were not meant for me—Earth! take these atoms!

(*As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff, the
 CHAMOIS HUNTER seizes and retains him with a
 sudden grasp.*)

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Hold, madman!—though aweary of thy life,
 Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood.—
 Away with me—I will not quit my hold.

I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—
I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl,
Spinning around me—I grow blind—What art thou?

I'll answer that anon.—Away with me—
The clouds grow thicker—there—now lean on me—
Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,
And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—
The chalet will be gained within an hour—
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,
And something like a pathway, which the torrent
Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 'tis bravely done—
You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

(*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the
scene closes.*)

MANFRED.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.

MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth :
Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other, for some hours, at least ;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide—
But whither ?

MANFRED.

It imports not : I do know
My route full well, and need no further guidance.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—
One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these
May call thee Lord ? I only know their portals ;
My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
Carousing with the vassals ; but the paths,
Which step from out our mountains to their door,
I know from childhood—which of these is thine ?

MANFRED.

No matter.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Well, Sir, pardon me the question,
 And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine;
 'Tis of an ancient vintage; many a day
 'T has thawed my veins among our glaciers, now
 Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge me fairly.

MANFRED.

Away, away! there's blood upon the brim!
 Will it then never—never sink in the earth?

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.

MANFRED.

I say 'tis blood—my blood! the pure warm stream
 Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours
 When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
 And loved each other as we should not love,
 And this was shed: but still it rises up,
 Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,
 Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Man of strange words, and some halfmaddening sin,
 Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
 Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet—
 The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience—

MANFRED.

Patience and patience! Hence—that word was made
For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,—
I am not of thine order.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Thanks to heaven!

I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.

MANFRED.

Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

This is convulsion, and no healthful life.

MANFRED.

I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,
Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages—ages—
Space and eternity—and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.

MANFRED.

Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,

Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms ; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcases and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Alas! he's mad—but yet I must not leave him.

MANFRED.

I would I were—for then the things I see
Would be but a distempered dream.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?

MANFRED.

Myself, and thee—a peasant of the Alps—
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud and free ;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts ;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep ; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless ; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grand children's love for epitaph ;
This do I see—and then I look within—
It matters not—my soul was scorch'd already !

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

And would'st thou then exchange thy lot for mine?

MANFRED.

No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange

My lot with living being : I can bear—
However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear
In life what others could not brook to dream,
But perish in their slumber

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

And with this—
This cautious feeling for another's pain,
Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge
Upon his enemies?

MANFRED.

Oh! no, no, no!
My injuries came down on those who loved me—
On those whom I best loved : I never quell'd
An enemy, save in my just defence—
But my embrace was fatal.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Heaven give thee rest!
And penitence to restore thee to thyself;
My prayers shall be for thee.

MANFRED.

I need them not,
But can endure thy pity. I depart—
'Tis time—farewell!—Here's gold, and thanks for thee—
No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—
I know my path—the mountain peril's past :—
And once again, I charge thee, follow not!

(Exit MANFRED.)

SCENE II.

A lower Valley in the Alps.—A Cataract.

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays ¹ still arch
 The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
 And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
 O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
 And fling its lines of foaming light along,
 And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
 The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,
 As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes
 But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
 I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
 And with the Spirit of the place divide
 The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

(MANFRED takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it in the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the WITCH OF THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.)

MANFRED.

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
 And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
 The charms of Earth's least mortal daughters grow
 To an unearthly stature, in an essence
 Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,
 Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,
 Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
 Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
 Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
 The blush of earth embracing with her heaven,—

Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
 The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.
 Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
 Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
 Which of itself shows immortality,
 I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
 Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
 At times to commune with them—if that he
 Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,
 And gaze on thee a moment.

WITCH.

Son of Earth!

I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;
 I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
 And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
 Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
 I have expected this—what would'st thou with me?

MANFRED.

To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.
 The face of the Earth hath madden'd me, and I
 Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
 To the abodes of those who govern her—
 But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
 From them what they could not bestow, and now
 I search no further.

WITCH.

What could be the quest
 Which is not in the power of the most powerful,
 The rulers of the invisible?

MANFRED.

A boon;
 But why should I repeat it? 'twere in vain.

WITCH.

I know not that ; let thy lips utter it.

MANFRED.

Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same ;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the Earth with human eyes ;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine ;
The aim of their existence was not mine ;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger ; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one who——but of her anon.
I said, with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion ; but instead,
My joy was in the wilderness, to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite ; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted ; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their developement ; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim ;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scattered leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone ;
For if the beings, of whom I was one,—
Hating to be so,—cross'd me in my path,

I felt myself degraded back to them,
 And was all clay again. And then I dived,
 In my lone wanderings, to the caves of Death,
 Searching its cause in its effect; and drew
 From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
 Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
 The nights of years in sciences untaught,
 Save in the old-time; and with time and toil,
 And terrible ordeal, and such penance
 As in itself hath power upon the air,
 And spirits that do compass air and earth,
 Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
 Mine eyes familiar with eternity,
 Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
 He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
 Eros and Anteros ^a, at Gadara,
 As I do thee; and with my knowledge grew
 The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
 Of this most bright intelligence, until——

WITCH.

Proceed.

MANFRED.

Oh! I but thus prolonged my words,
 Boasting these idle attributes, because
 As I approach the core of my heart's grief—
 But to my task. I have not named to thee
 Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
 With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
 If I had such, they seem'd not such to me—
 Yet there was one——

WITCH.

Spare not thyself—proceed.

MANFRED.

MANFRED.

She was like me in lineaments—her eyes,
 Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
 Even of her voice, they said, were like to mine;
 But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty;
 She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
 The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
 To comprehend the universe: nor these
 Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
 Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;
 And tenderness—but that I had for her;
 Humility—and that I never had.
 Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—
 I loved her, and destroy'd her!

WITCH.

With thy hand?

MANFRED.

Not with my hand, but heart—which broke her heart—
 It gazed on mine, and withered. I have shed
 Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed—
 I saw—and could not staunch it.

WITCH.

And for this—

A being of the race thou dost despise,
 The order which thine own would rise above,
 Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego
 The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back
 To recreant mortality——Away!

MANFRED.

Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour—
 But words are breath—look on me in my sleep,

Or watch my watchings—Come and sit by me!
My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies :—I have gnash'd
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset ;—I have pray'd
For madness as a blessing—'tis denied me.
I have affronted death—but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless—the cold hand
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not break.
In phantasy, imagination, all
The affluence of my soul—which one day was
A Croesus in creation—I plunged deep,
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.
I plunged amidst mankind—Forgetfulness
I sought in all, save where 'tis to be found,
And that I have to learn—my sciences,
My long pursued and super-human art,
Is mortal here—I dwell in my despair—
And live—and live for ever.

WITCH.

It may be

That I can aid thee.

MANFRED.

To do this thy power
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.
Do so in any shape—in any hour—
With any torture—so it be the last.

WITCH.

That is not in my province; but if thou
Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

MANFRED.

I will not swear—Obey! and whom? the spirits
Whose presence I command, and be the slave
Of those who served me—Never!

WITCH.

Is this all!
Hast thou no gentler answer?—Yet bethink thee,
And pause ere thou rejectest.

MANFRED.

I have said it.

WITCH.

Enough!—I may retire then—say!

MANFRED.

Retire!

*(The WITCH disappears.)*MANFRED (*alone.*)

We are the fools of time and terror. Days
Steal on us and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
In all the days of this detested yoke—
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—
In all the days of past and future, for
In life there is no present, we can number

How few—how less than few—wherein the soul
Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
As from a stream in winter, though the chill
Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science—I can call the dead,
And ask them what it is we dread to be :
The sternest answer can but be the grave,
And that is nothing—if they answer not—
The buried Prophet answered to the Hag
Of Endor ; and the Spartan Monarch drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
An answer and his destiny—he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
And died unpardon'd—though he call'd in aid
The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
The Arcadian Evocators to compel
The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,
Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd³.

If I had never lived, that which I love
Had still been living ; had I never loved,
That which I love would still be beautiful—
Happy and giving happiness. What is she ?
What is she now ?—a sufferer for my sins—
A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.
Within few hours I shall not call in vain—
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare :
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
On spirit, good and evil—now I tremble,
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart,
But I can act even what I most abhor,
And champion human fears.—The night approaches.

(Exit.)

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SCENE III.

The summit of the Jung-frau Mountain.

Enter FIRST DESTINY.

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright ;
And here on snows, where never human foot
Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces ; o'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's image ;
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds
Pause to repose themselves in passing by—
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils ;
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
Is our great festival—'tis strange they come not.

A Voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
Hur'd down from the throne,
Lay buried in torpor,
Forgotten and lone ;
I broke through his slumbers,
I shivered his chain,
I leagued him with numbers—
He's Tyrant again !
With the blood of a million he'll answer my care,
With a nation's destruction—his flight and despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
 But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
 There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,
 And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck;
 Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,
 And he was a subject well worthy my care;
 A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea—
 But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

FIRST DESTINY, answering.

The city lies sleeping;
 The morn, to deplore it,
 May dawn on it weeping.
 Sullenly, slowly,
 The black plague flew o'er it—
 Thousands lie lowly;
 Tens of thousands shall perish—
 The living shall fly from
 The sick they should cherish;
 But nothing can vanquish
 The touch that they die from.
 Sorrow and anguish,
 And evil and dread,
 Envelope a nation—
 The blest are the dead,
 Who see not the sight
 Of their own desolation.—
 This work of a night,
 This wreck of a realm—this deed of my doing—
 For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing!

(*Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES.*

THE THREE.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
 Our footsteps are their graves ;
 We only give to take again
 The spirits of our slaves !

FIRST DESTINY.

Welcome !—Where's Nemesis ?

SECOND DESTINY.

At some great work ;
 But what I know not, for my hands were full.

THIRD DESTINY.

Behold she cometh.

(*Enter NEMESIS.*)

FIRST DESTINY.

Say, where hast thou been ?
 My sisters and thyself are slow to night.

NEMESIS.

I was detain'd repairing shattered thrones,
 Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
 Avenging men upon their enemies,
 And making them repent their own revenge ;
 Goadng the wise to madness ; from the dull
 Shaping out oracles to rule the world
 Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,
 And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
 To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
 Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away !
 We have outstaid the hour—mount we our clouds !
 (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV.

The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his throne, a globe of fire, surrounded by the Spirits.

HYMN OF THE SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth and Air!—
 Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand
 The sceptre of the elements, which tear
 Themselves to chaos at his high command!
 He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea;
 He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder;
 He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee;
 He moveth—earthquakes rend the world asunder.
 Beneath his footsteps the volcanos rise;
 His shadow is the Pestilence; his path
 The comets herald through the crackling skies;
 And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
 To him War offers daily sacrifice;
 To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,
 With all its infinite of agonies—
 And his the spirit of whatever is!

(*Enter the DESTINIES and NEMESIS.*)

FIRST DESTINY.

Glory to Arimanes! on the earth
 His power increaseth—both my sisters did
 His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!

SECOND DESTINY.

Glory to Arimanes! we who bow
 The necks of men, bow down before his throne!

THIRD DESTINY.

Glory to Arimanes!—we await
His nod!

NEMESIS.

Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to increase
Our power, increasing thine, demands our care,
And we are vigilant—Thy late commands
Have been fulfilled to the utmost.

(*Enter MANFRED.*)

A SPIRIT.

What is here?
A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal wretch,
Bow down and worship!

SECOND SPIRIT.

I do know the man—
A magian of great power, and fearful skill!

THIRD SPIRIT.

Bow down and worship, slave!—What, know'st thou no
Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble, and obey!

ALL THE SPIRITS.

Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned clay,
Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.

MANFRED.

I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Twill be taught thee.

MANFRED.

'Tis taught already ;—many a night on the earth,
On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,
And strew'd my head with ashes ; I have known
The fulness of humiliation, for
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.

FIFTH SPIRIT.

Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, beholding not
The terror of his glory ?—Crouch ! I say.

MANFRED.

Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,
The overruling Infinite—the Maker
Who made him not for worship—let him kneel,
And we will kneel together.

THE SPIRITS.

Crush the worm !
Tear him in pieces !—

FIRST DESTINY.

Hence ! Avaunt !—he's mine,
Prince of the Powers invisible ! This man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote ; his sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature, like
Our own ; his knowledge, and his powers and will,
As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the etherial essence, have been such.

As clay hath seldom borne ; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know—
That knowledge is not happiness, and science
But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.
This is not all—the passions, attributes
Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,
Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,
Have pierced his heart ; and in their consequence
Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,
And thine, it may be—be it so, or not,
No other Spirit in this region hath
A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

NEMESIS.

What doth he here then ?

FIRST DESTINY.

Let him answer that.

MANFRED.

Ye know what I have known , and without power
I could not be amongst ye : but there are
Powers deeper still beyond—I come in quest
Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

NEMESIS.

What would'st thou?

MANFRED.

Thou canst not reply to me.
Call up the dead—my question is for them.

NEMESIS.

Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch
The wishes of this mortal?

ARIMANES.

Yea.

NEMESIS.

Whom would'st thou
Uncharnel?

MANFRED.

One without a tomb—call up
Astarte.

NEMESIS.

Shadow! or Spirit!
Whatever thou art,
Which still doth inherit
The whole or a part
Of the form of thy birth,
Of the mould of thy clay,
Which returned to the earth,
Re-appear to the day!
Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worest
Redeem from the worm.
Appear!—Appear!—Appear!
Who sent thee there requires thee here!

(*The phantom of ASTARTE rises and
stands in the midst.*)

MANFRED.

Can this be Death? there's bloom upon her cheek;

But now I see it is no living hue,
 But a strange hectic—like the unnatural red
 Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.
 It is the same! Oh! God! that I should dread
 To look upon the same—Astarte!—No,
 I cannot speak to her—but bid her speak—
 Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken
 The grave which enthrall'd thee,
 Speak to him who hath spoken,
 Or those who have call'd thee!

MANFRED.

She is silent,
 And in that silence I am more than answered.

NEMESIS.

My power extends no further. Prince of air!
 It rests with thee alone—command her voice.

ARIMANES.

Spirit—obey this sceptre!

NEMESIS.

Silent still!
 She is not of our order, but belongs
 To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
 And we are baffled also.

MANFRED.

Hear me, hear me—
 Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:

I have so much endured—so much endure—
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. 'Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee : we were not made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do bear
This punishment for both—that thou wilt be
One of the blessed—and that I shall die;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence—in a life
Which makes me shrink from immortality—
A future like the past. I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek :
I feel but what thou art—and what I am;
And I would hear yet once before I perish
The voice which was my music—Speak to me!
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
Which answered me—many things answered me—
Spirits and men—but thou wert silent all.
Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd the stars,
And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
Speak to me! I have wandered o'er the earth,
And never found thy likeness—Speak to me!
Look on the fiends around—they feel for me :
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—
Speak to me! though it be in wrath;—but say—
I reck not what—but let me hear thee once—
This once—once more!

MANFRED.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.

MANFRED and HERMAN.

MANFRED.

What is the hour?

HERMAN.

It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.

MANFRED.

Say,
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?

HERMAN.

All, my lord, are ready ;
Here is the key and casket.

MANFRED.

It is well :
Thou may'st retire.

(*Exit HERMAN.*)

MANFRED (*alone.*)

There is a calm upon me—
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.
If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought « Kalon, » found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once :
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

(Re-enter HERMAN.)

HERMAN.

My lord, the Abbot of Saint Maurice craves
To greet your presence.

(Enter the ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.)

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Peace be with Count Manfred!

MANFRED.

Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls ;
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Would it were so, Count!—
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

MANFRED.

Herman, retire. What would my reverend guest?

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Thus, without prelude :—Age and zeal, my office,
And good intent, must plead my privilege ;
Our near though not acquainted neighbourhood,
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name, a noble name
For centuries ; may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpair'd !

MANFRED.

Proceed,—I listen.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man ;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the shade of Death,
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

MANFRED.

And what are they who do avouch these things ?

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

My pious brethren—the scared peasantry—
Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

MANFRED.

Take it.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

I come to save, and not destroy—
I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity : reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

MANFRED.

I hear thee. This is my reply ; whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself.—I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances, prove and punish!

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

My son ! I did not speak of punishment,
But penitence and pardon ;—with thyself
The choice of such remains—and for the last,
Our institutions and our strong belief
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin
To higher hope and better thoughts ; the first
I leave to heaven—" Vengeance is mine alone ! "
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
His servant echoes back the awful word.

MANFRED.

Old man ! there is no power in holy men,
Nor charm in prayer—nor purifying form
Of penitence—nor outward look—nor fast,
Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,
The innate tortures of that deep despair,
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,
But all in all sufficient to itself

Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise
 From out the unbounded spirit, the quick sense
 Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge
 Upon itself, there is no future pang
 Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
 He deals on his own soul.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

All this is well;
 For this will pass away, and be succeeded
 By an auspicious hope, which shall look up
 With calm assurance to that blessed place,
 Which all who seek may win, whatever be
 Their earthly errors, so they be atoned :
 And the commencement of atonement is
 The sense of its necessity.—Say on—
 And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;
 And all we can absolve thee, shall be pardon'd.

MANFRED.

When Rome's sixth Emperor was near his last,
 The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
 To shun the torments of a public death
 From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,
 With show of loyal pity, would have staunch'd
 The gushing throat with his officious robe;
 The dying Roman thrust him back and said—
 Some empire still in his expiring glance,
 " It is too late—is this fidelity? "

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

And what of this?

MANFRED.

I answer with the Roman—

" It is too late! "

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast thou no hope?
 'Tis strange—even those who do despair above,
Yet shape themselves some phantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.

MANFRED.

Ay—father! I have had those earthly visions
 And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise
 I knew not whither—it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
 (Which casts up misty columns that become
 Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,)
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

And wherefore so?

MANFRED.

I could not tame my nature down; for he
Must serve who fain would sway—and sooth—and sue—
And watch all time—and pry into all place—
And be a living lie—who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and such
The mass are; I disdained to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.
The lion is alone, and so am I.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

And why not live and act with other men?

MANFRED.

Because my nature was averse from life ;
And yet not cruel ; for I would not make,
But find a desolation :—like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly ; such hath been
The course of my existence ; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Alas!

I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling ; yet so young,
I still would——

MANFRED.

Look on me ! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become
Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
Without the violence of warlike death ;
Some perishing of pleasure—some of study—
Some worn with toil—some of mere weariness—
Some of disease—and some insanity—
And some of withered or of broken hearts ;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are numbered in the lists of Fate,

Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.
Look upon me! for even of all these things
Have I partaken; and of all these things,
One were enough; then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Yet, hear me still——

MANFRED.

Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,
Far more than me, in shunning at this time
All further colloquy—and so—farewell.

(*Exit* MANFRED.)

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

This should have been a noble creature: he
Hath all the energy which would have made
A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness—
And mind and dust—and passions and pure thoughts,
Mix'd, and contending without end or order,
All dormant or destructive: he will perish,
And yet he must not; I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption; and my duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.

(*Exit* ABBOT.)

MANFRED.

SCENE II.

Another chamber.

MANFRED and HERMAN.

HERMAN.

My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset:
He sinks behind the mountain.

MANFRED.

Doth he so?

I will look on him.

(MANFRED advances to the window of the Hall.)

Glorious orb! the idol
Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons⁴
Of the embrace of angels with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown—
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee,

Even as our outward aspects ;—thou dost rise,
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
My latest look : thou wilt not beam on one
To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone :
I follow.

(Exit MANFRED.)

SCENE III.

The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at some distance.—A terrace before a Tower.—Time, Twilight.

HERMAN, MANUEL, and other dependants of MANFRED.

HERMAN.

'Tis strange enough ; night after night, for years,
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it,—
So have we all been oft-times ; but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible
To draw conclusions absolute of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter ; I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years,
To pore upon its mysteries.

MANUEL.

'Twere dangerous ;
Content thyself with what thou knowest already.

HERMAN.

Ah ! Manuel ! thou art elderly and wise,
And could'st say much ; thou hast dwelt within the castle—
How many years is't ?

MANFRED.

MANUEL.

Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.

HERMAN.

There be more sons in like predicament.
But wherein do they differ?

MANUEL.

I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits :
Count Sigismund was proud,—but gay and free,—
A warrior and a reveller ; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the night
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day ; he did not walk the rocks
And forests, like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.

HERMAN.

Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times ! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again ; they look
As if they had forgotten them.

MANUEL.

These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh ! I have seen
Some strange things in them, Herman.

HERMAN.

Come, be friend
Relate me some to while away our watch :
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happened hereabouts, by this same tower.

MANUEL.

That was a night indeed; I do remember
 'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such
 Another evening;—yon red cloud, which rests
 On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—
 So like that it might be the same; the wind
 Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
 Began to glitter with the climbing moon;
 Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—
 How occupied, we knew not, but with him
 The sole companion of his wanderings
 And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things
 That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love,
 As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,
 The lady Astarte, his,—Hush! who comes here?

(*Enter the ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.*)

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Where is your master?

HERMAN.

Yonder, in the tower.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

I must speak with him.

MANUEL.

'Tis impossible;
 He is most private, and must not be thus
 Intruded on.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Upon myself I take
 The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
 But I must see him.

MANFRED.

HERMAN.

Thou hast seen him once
This eve already.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Herman! I command thee,
Knock, and apprise the Count of my approach.

HERMAN.

We dare not.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose.

MANUEL.

Reverend father, stop—
I pray you, pause.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Why so?

MANUEL.

But step this way,
And I will tell you further.
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV.

(*Interior of the Tower.*)

MANFRED *alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night

Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering,—upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watchdog bayed beyond the Tiber; and
More near from out the Cæsar's palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appeared to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot—where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths.
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;—
But the gladiator's bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 'twere, anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place

Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
 With silent worship of the great of old!—
 The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
 Our spirits from their urns.—'Twas such a night!
 'Tis strange that I recall it at this time;
 But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight
 Even at the moment when they should array
 Themselves in pensive order.

(*Enter the ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.*)

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

My good Lord!

I crave a second grace for this approach;
 But yet let not my humble zeal offend
 By its abruptness—all it hath of ill
 Recoils on me; its good in the effect
 May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—
 Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should
 Recall a noble spirit which hath wandered,
 But is not yet all lost.

MANFRED.

Thou know'st me not;
 My days are numbered, and my deeds recorded:
 Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away!

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Thou dost not mean to menace me?

MANFRED.

Not I;

I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
 And would preserve thee.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

What dost mean?

MANFRED.

Look there!

What dost thou see?

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Nothing.

MANFRED.

Look there, I say,

And steadfastly; now tell me what thou seest?

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

That which should shake me,—but I fear it not—
I see a dusk and awful figure rise
Like an infernal god from out the earth;
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds; he stands between
Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.

MANFRED.

Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—but
His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.
I say to thee—Retire!

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

And I reply—

Never—till I have battled with this fiend—
What doth he here?

MANFRED.

Why—ay—what doth he here?

I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Alas! lost mortal! what with guests like these
Hast thou to do! I tremble for thy sake;
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?
Ah! he unveils his aspect; on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye
Glares forth the immortality of Hell—
Avaunt!——

MANFRED.

Pronounce—what is thy mission?

SPIRIT.

Come!

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

What art thou, unknown being! answer—speak!

SPIRIT.

The genius of this mortal.—Come! 'tis time.

MANFRED.

I am prepared for all things, but deny
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here?

SPIRIT.

Thou'lt know anon—Come! come!

MANFRED.

I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!

SPIRIT.

Mortal! thine hour is come—Away! I say.

MANFRED.

I knew and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee :
Away ! I'll die as I have lived—alone.

SPIRIT.

Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise !

(Other Spirits rise up.)

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Avaunt ! ye evil ones !—Avaunt ! I say,—
Ye have no power where piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name—

SPIRIT.

Old man !

We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order ;
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain ; this man is forfeited.
Once more I summon him—Away ! away !

MANFRED.

I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye ;
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength
To wrestle, though with spirits ; what ye take
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

SPIRIT.

Reluctant mortal !

Is this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself

Almost our equal?—Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life? the very life
Which made thee wretched!

MANFRED.

Thou false fiend, thou liest!

My life is in its last hour,—*that* I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;
I do not combat against Death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
But by superior science—penance—daring—
And length of watching—strength of mind—and skill
In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth
Saw men and spirits walking side by side,
And gave ye no supremacy; I stand
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—
Spurn back, and scorn ye!—

SPIRIT.

But thy many crimes

Have made thee—

MANFRED.

What are they to such as thee?

Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals?—Back to thy Hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts—
Is its own origin of ill and end—
And its own place and time—its innate sense, ..

When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without;
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou could'st not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of Death is on me—but not yours!

(The demons disappear.)

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Alas! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—
And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat
The accents rattle—Give thy prayers to heaven—
Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

MANFRED.

'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;
But all things swim around me, and the earth
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well—
Give me thy hand.

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

Cold—cold—even to the heart—
But yet one prayer—alas! how fares it with thee?—

MANFRED.

Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die.

(MANFRED expires.)

ABBOT OF SAINT MAURICE.

He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight—
Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.

NOTES

Note 1, page 66, line 4.

———*the sunbow's rays still arch*
The torrent with the many hues of heaven.

This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the Alpine torrents: it is exactly like a rainbow, come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it:—this effect lasts till noon.

Note 2, page 69, line 15.

He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros, at Gadara.

The philosopher Iamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his life, by Eunapius. It is well told.

Note 3, page 73, line 19.

———*she replied*
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.

The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta, (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Platea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedemonians) and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's life of Cimon; and in the Laconics of Pausanias the Sophist, in his description of Greece.

Note 4, page 94, line 13.

———*the giant sons*
Of the embrace of angels.

« That the *Sons of God* saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, » etc.

« There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the *Sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. »

Genesis, ch. vj. verses 2 and 4.

MAZEPPA,

A POEM.



ADVERTISEMENT.

« CELUI qui remplissait alors cette place était
« un gentilhomme polonais nommé Mazeppa ,
« né dans le palatinat de Podolie ; il avait été
« élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa
« cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une
« intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la
« femme d'un gentilhomme polonais ayant été
« découverte , le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un
« cheval farouche , et le laissa aller en cet état.
« Le cheval , qui était du pays de l'Ukraine ,
« y retourna , et y porta Mazeppa demi-mort
« de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le
« secoururent. Il resta long-temps parmi eux ,
« et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les
« Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui
« donna une grande considération parmi les
« Cosaques. Sa réputation s'augmentant de jour
« en jour obligea le Czar à le faire prince de
« l'Ukraine. » VOLTAIRE, *Hist. de Charles XII*,
p. 273 , tom. 5 , édit. de Desoer.

« Le roi fuyant et poursuivi , eut son cheval
« tué sous lui ; le colonel Gieta , blessé et per-
« dant tout son sang , lui donna le sien. Ainsi,
« on remit deux fois à cheval , dans sa fuite, ce
« conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant
« la bataille. » *Idem.* p. 283.

« Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse où il était rompit dans la marche ; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrâce , il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois ; là , son courage ne pouvait plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées , les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue , son cheval étant tombé de lassitude , il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre , en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs , qui le cherchaient de tous côtés. » *Idem.*
p. 284.

MAZEPPA.

I.

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,
Around a slaughter'd army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar, \\
And Moscow's walls were safe again,
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year,
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name ;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die ;
The wounded Charles was taught to fly
By day and night through field and flood,
Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood ;
For thousands fell that flight to aid :
And not a voice was heard t'upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When truth had nought to dread from power.

His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
His own—and died the Russian's slave.
This too sinks after many a league
Of well sustain'd but vain fatigue ;
And in the depth of forests, darkling
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—
The beacons of surrounding foes—
A king must lay his limbs at length.
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,
In out-worn nature's agony ;
His wounds were stiff—his limbs were stark—
The heavy hour was chill and dark :
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid :
And thus it was ; but yet through all,
Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will ;
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

III.

A band of chiefs !—alas ! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinn'd it ; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous : upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed ;
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade—

Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's hetman, calm and bold ;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,
And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,
And joy'd to see how well he fed ;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews :
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board ;
But spirited and docile too ;
Whate'er was to be done, would do.
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
All Tartar-like he carried him ;
Obey'd his voice, and came at call,
And knew him in the midst of all :
Though thousands were around,—and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight,—
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good
The long day's march had well withstood—
If still the powder fill'd the pan,
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock—
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt—

And next the venerable man,
 From out his haversack and can,
 Prepared and spread his slender stock ;
 And to the monarch and his men
 The whole or portion offer'd then
 With far less of inquietude
 Than courtiers at a banquet would.
 And Charles of this his slender share
 With smiles partook a moment there,
 To force of cheer a greater show,
 And seem above both wounds and woe ;—
 And then he said—« Of all our band,
 « Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
 « In skirmish, march, or forage, none
 « Can less have said or more have done
 « Than thee, Mazeppa ! On the earth
 « So fit a pair had never birth,
 « Since Alexander's days till now,
 « As thy Bucephalus and thou :
 « All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
 « For pricking on o'er flood and field. »
 Mazeppa answer'd—« Ill betide
 « The school wherein I learn'd to ride ! »
 Quoth Charles—« Old hetman, wherefore so,
 « Since thou hast learn'd the art so well ? »
 Mazeppa said—« 'Twere long to tell ;
 « And we have many a league to go
 « With every now and then a blow,
 « And ten to one at least the foe,
 « Before our steeds may graze at ease
 « Beyond the swift Borysthene :
 « And, Sire, your limbs have need of rest,
 « And I will be the sentinel

“ Of this your troop. ”—“ But I request, ”
Said Sweden’s monarch, “ thou wilt tell
“ This tale of thine, and I may reap,
“ Perchance, from this the boon of sleep,
“ For at this moment from my eyes
“ The hope of present slumber flies. ”

V.

“ Well, Sire, with such a hope, I’ll track
“ My seventy years of memory back :
“ I think ’twas in my twentieth spring,—
“ Ay, ’twas,—when Casimir was king—
“ John Casimir,—I was his page
“ Six summers in my earlier age;
“ A learned monarch, faith! was he,
“ And most unlike your majesty :
“ He made no wars, and did not gain
“ New realms to lose them back again;
“ And (save debates in Warsaw’s diet)
“ He reign’d in most unseemly quiet;
“ Not that he had no cares to vex,
“ He loved the Muses and the sex ;
“ And sometimes these so froward are,
“ They made him wish himself at war;
“ But soon his wrath being o’er, he took
“ Another mistress, or new book :
“ And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
“ All Warsaw gather’d round his gates
“ To gaze upon his splendid court,
“ And dames, and chiefs of princely port :
“ He was the Polish Solomon,
“ So sung his poets, all but one,
“ Who, being unpension’d, made a satire,
“ And boasted that he could not flatter.

- « It was a court of jousts and mimes,
- « Where every courtier tried at rhymes ;
- « Even I for once produced some verses,
- « And sign'd my odes, Despairing Thirsis.

VI.

- « There was a certain Palatine,
- « A count of far and high descent,
- « Rich as a salt or silver mine (1) ;
- « And he was proud, ye may divine,
- « As if from heaven he had been sent :
- « He had such wealth in blood and ore
- « As few could match beneath the throne ;
- « And he would gaze upon his store,
- « And o'er his pedigree would pore,
- « Until by some confusion led,
- « Which almost look'd like want of head,
- « He thought their merits were his own.
- « His wife was not of his opinion—
- « His junior she by thirty years—
- « Grew daily tired of his dominion ;
- « And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,
- « To virtue a few farewell tears,
- « A restless dream or two, some glances
- « At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,
- « Awaited but the usual chances,
- « Those happy accidents which render
- « The coldest dames so very tender,
- « To deck her Count with titles given,
- « 'Tis said, as passports into heaven ;
- « But, strange to say, they rarely boast
- « Of these who have deserved them most.

(1) This comparison of a « salt mine » may perhaps
 be attributed to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists
 in the salt mines.

VII.

« I was a goodly stripling then ;
« At seventy years I so may say ,
« That there were few , or boys or men ,
« Who , in my dawning time of day ,
« Of vassal or of knight's degree ,
« Could vie in vanities with me ;
« For I had strength , youth , gaiety ,
« A port , not like to this ye see ,
« But smooth , as all is rugged now ;
« For time , and care , and war , have plough'd
« My very soul from out my brow ;
« And thus I should be disavow'd
« By all my kind and kin , could they
« Compare my day and yesterday ;
« This change was wrought , too , long ere age
« Had ta'en my features for his page :
« With years , ye know , have not declined
« My strength , my courage , or my mind ,
« Or at this hour I should not be
« Telling old tales beneath a tree ,
« With starless skies my canopy .
« But let me on : Theresa's form—
« Methinks it glides before me now ,
« Between me and yon chestnut's bough ,
« The memory is so quick and warm ;
« And yet I find no words to tell
« The shape of her I loved so well :
« She had the Asiatic eye ,
« Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
« Hath mingled with our Polish blood ,
« Dark as above us is the sky ;

- « But through it stole a tender light,
- « Like the first moonrise at midnight;
- « Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
- « Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
- « All love, half languor, and half fire,
- « Like saints that at the stake expire,
- « And lift their raptured looks on high,
- « As though it were a joy to die.
- « A brow like a midsummer lake,
- « Transparent with the sun therein,
- « When waves no murmur dare to make,
- « And heaven beholds her face within.
- « A cheek and lip—but why proceed?
- « I loved her then—I love her still;
- « And such as I am, love indeed
- « In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
- « But still we love even in our rage,
- « And haunted to our very age
- « With the vain shadow of the past,
- « As is Mazeppa to the last.

VIII.

- « We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh'd,
- « She did not speak, and yet replied;
- « There are ten thousand tones and signs
- « We hear and see, but none defines—
- « Involuntary sparks of thought,
- « Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
- « And form a strange intelligence,
- « Alike mysterious and intense,
- « Which link the burning chain that binds,
- « Without their will, young hearts and minds;
- « Conveying, as the electric wire,
- « We know not how, the absorbing fire.—

“ I saw, and sigh’d—in silence wept,
“ And still reluctant distance kept,
“ Until I was made known to her,
“ And we might then and there confer
“ Without suspicion—then, even then,
“ I long’d, and was resolved to speak;
“ But on my lips they died again,
“ The accents tremulous and weak,
“ Until one hour.—There is a game,
“ A frivolous and foolish play,
“ Wherewith we while away the day;
“ It is—I have forgot the name—
“ And we to this, it seems, were set,
“ By some strange chance, which I forget :
“ I reck’d not if I won or lost,
“ It was enough for me to be
“ So near to hear, and oh! to see
“ The being whom I loved the most.—
“ I watch’d her as a sentinel,
“ (May ours this dark night watch as well!)
“ Until I saw, and thus it was,
“ That she was pensive, nor perceived
“ Her occupation, nor was grieved
“ Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
“ Play’d on for hours, as if her will
“ Yet bound her to the place, though not
“ That hers might be the winning lot.
“ Then through my brain the thought did pass
“ Even as a flash of lightning there,
“ That there was something in her air
“ Which would not doom me to despair;
“ And on the thought my words broke forth,
“ All incoherent as they were—
“ Their eloquence was little worth,

- “ But yet she listen’d—’tis enough—
- “ Who listens once will listen twice ;
- “ Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
- “ And one refusal no rebuff.

IX.

- “ I loved, and was beloved again—
- “ They tell me, Sire, you never knew
- “ Those gentle frailties ; if ’tis true,
- “ I shorten all my joy or pain,
- “ To you ’twould seem absurd as vain ;
- “ But all men are not born to reign,
- “ Or o’er their passions, or, as you,
- “ Thus o’er themselves and nations too.
- “ I am—or rather *was*—a prince,
- “ A chief of thousands, and could lead
- “ Them on where each would foremost bleed ;
- “ But could not o’er myself evince
- “ The like control—But to resume :
- “ I loved, and was beloved again ;
- “ In sooth, it is a happy doom,
- “ But yet where happiest ends in pain. —
- “ We met in secret, and the hour
- “ Which led me to that lady’s bower
- “ Was fiery expectation’s dower.
- “ My days and nights were nothing—all
- “ Except that hour, which doth recall
- “ In the long lapse from youth to age
- “ No other like itself—I’d give
- “ The Ukraine back again to live
- “ It o’er once more—and be a page,
- “ The happy page, who was the lord
- “ Of one soft heart, and his own sword,

- « And had no other gem nor wealth
 « Save nature's gift of youth and health.—
 « We met in secret—doubly sweet,
 « Some say, they find it so to meet;
 « I know not that—I would have given
 « My life but to have call'd her mine
 « In the full view of earth and heaven;
 « For I did oft and long repine
 « That we could only meet by stealth.

X.

- « For lovers there are many eyes,
 « And such there were on us;—the devil
 « On such occasions should be civil—
 « The devil!—I'm loth to do him wrong,
 « It might be some untoward saint,
 « Who would not be at rest too long,
 « But to his pious bile gave vent—
 « But one fair night, some lurking spies
 « Surprised and seized us both.
 « The Count was something more than wroth—
 « I was unarm'd; but if in steel,
 « All cap-a-pie from head to heel,
 « What 'gainst their numbers could I do?—
 « 'Twas near his castle, far away
 « From city or from succour near,
 « And almost on the break of day;
 « I did not think to see another,
 « My moments seem'd reduced to few;
 « And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
 « And, it may be, a saint or two,
 « As I resign'd me to my fate,
 « They led me to the castle gate :
 « Theresa's doom I never knew,

- “ Our lot was henceforth separate.—
“ An angry man, ye may opine,
“ Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
“ And he had reason good to be,
“ But he was most enraged lest such
“ An accident should chance to touch
“ Upon his future pedigree;
“ Nor less amazed, that such a blot
“ His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
“ While he was highest of his line;
“ Because unto himself he seem'd
“ The first of men, nor less he deem'd
“ In others' eyes, and most in mine.
“ 'Sdeath! with a *page*—perchance a king
“ Had reconciled him to the thing;
“ But with a stripling of a page—
“ I felt—but cannot paint his rage.

XI.

- “ ‘Bring forth the horse!’—the horse was brought;
“ In truth, he was a noble steed,
“ A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
“ Who look'd as though the speed of thought
“ Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
“ Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
“ With spur and bridle undefiled—
“ 'Twas but a day he had been caught;
“ And snorting, with erected mane,
“ And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
“ In the full foam of wrath and dread
“ To me the desert-born was led:
“ They bound me on, that menial throng,
“ Upon his back with many a thong;

- « Then loosed him with a sudden lash—
- « Away!—away!—and on we dash!—
- « Torrents less rapid and less rash.

XII.

- « Away!—away!—My breath was gone—
- « I saw not where he hurried on :
- « 'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
- « And on he foam'd—away!—away!—
- « The last of human sounds which rose,
- « As I was darted from my foes,
- « Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
- « Which on the wind came roaring after
- « A moment from that rabble rout :
- « With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
- « And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane
- « Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
- « And writhing half my form about,
- « How'd back my curse ; but midst the tread,
- « The thunder of my courser's speed,
- « Perchance they did not hear nor heed :
- « It vexes me—for I would fain
- « Have paid their insult back again.
- « I paid it well in after days :
- « There is not of that castle gate,
- « Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
- « Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
- « Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
- « Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
- « Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall ;
- « And many a time ye there might pass,
- « Nor dream that e'er that fortress was :
- « I saw its turrets in a blaze,
- « Their crackling battlements all cleft,

« And the hot lead pour down like rain
« From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
« Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
« They little thought that day of pain,
« When lanch'd, as on the lightning's flash,
« They bade me to destruction dash,
« That one day I should come again,
« With twice five thousand horse, to thank
« The Count for his uncourteous ride.
« They play'd me then a bitter prank,
« When, with the wild horse for my guide,
« They bound me to his foaming flank :
« At length I play'd them one as frank—
« For time at last sets all things even—
« And if we do but watch the hour,
« There never yet was human power
« Which could evade, if unforgiven,
« The patient search and vigil long
« Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XIII.

« Away, away, my steed and I,
« Upon the pinions of the wind,
« All human dwellings left behind;
« We sped like meteors through the sky,
« When with its crackling sound the night
« Is chequer'd with the northern light :
« Town—village—none were on our track,
« But a wild plain of far extent,
« And bounded by a forest black ;
« And, save the scarce seen battlement
« On distant heights of some strong hold,
« Against the Tartars built of old,
« No trace of man. The year before

« A Turkish army had march'd o'er;
 « And where the Spahi's hoof had trod,
 « The verdure flies the bloody sod :—
 « The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
 « And a low breeze crept moaning by—
 « I could have answer'd with a sigh—
 « But fast we fled, away, away—
 « And I could neither sigh nor pray;
 « And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
 « Upon the courser's bristling mane;
 « But, snorting still with rage and fear,
 « He flew upon his far career :
 « At times I almost thought, indeed,
 « He must have slacken'd in his speed;
 « But no—my bound and slender frame
 « Was nothing to his angry might,
 « And merely like a spur became :
 « Each motion which I made to free
 « My swoln limbs from their agony,
 « Increased his fury and affright :
 « I tried my voice,—'twas faint and low,
 « But yet he swerved as from a blow;
 « And, starting to each accent, sprang
 « As from a sudden trumpet's clang :
 « Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
 « Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
 « And in my tongue the thirst became
 « A something fierier far than flame.

XIV.

« We near'd the wild wood—'twas so wide,
 « I saw no bounds on either side;
 « 'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
 « That bent not to the roughest breeze

" Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
 " And strips the forest in its haste,—
 " But these were few, and far between
 " Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
 " Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
 " Ere strown by those autumnal eves
 " That nip the forest's foliage dead,
 " Discolour'd with a lifeless red,
 " Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore
 " Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
 " And some long winter's night hath shed
 " Its frost o'er every tombless head,
 " So cold and stark, the raven's beak
 " May peck unpierced each frozen cheek :
 " 'Twas a wild waste of underwood;
 " And here and there a chestnut stood,
 " The strong oak, and the hardy pine ;
 " But far apart—and well it were,
 " Or else a different lot were mine—
 " The boughs gave way, and did not tear
 " My limbs; and I found strength to bear
 " My wounds, already scarr'd with cold—
 " My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
 " We rustled through the leaves like wind,
 " Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
 " By night I heard them on the track,
 " Their troop came hard upon our back,
 " With their long gallop, which can tire
 " The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire :
 " Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
 " Nor left us with the morning sun ;
 " Behind I saw them scarce a rood,
 " At day-break winding through the wood,

“ And through the night had heard their feet
“ Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
“ Oh ! how I wish’d for spear or sword,
“ At least to die amidst the horde,
“ And perish—if it must be so—
“ At bay, destroying many a foe.
“ When first my courser’s race begun,
“ I wish’d the goal already won ;
“ But now I doubted strength and speed.
“ Vain doubt ! his swift and savage breed
“ Had nerved him like the mountain-ros ;
“ Nor faster falls the blinding snow
“ Which whelms the peasant near the door
“ Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
“ Bewilder’d with the dazzling blast,
“ Than through the forest-paths he past—
“ Untired, untamed, and worse than wild ;
“ All furious as a favour’d child
“ Balk’d of its wish ; or, fiercer still—
“ A woman piqued—who has her will.

XV.

“ The wood was past ; ’twas more than noon,
“ But chill the air although in June ;
“ Or it might be my veins ran cold—
“ Prolong’d endurance tames the bold ;
“ And I was then not what I seem,
“ But headlong as a wintry stream,
“ And wore my feelings out before
“ I well could count their causes o’er :
“ And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
“ The tortures which beset my path,
“ Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
“ Thus bound in nature’s nakedness ;

« Sprung from a race whose rising blood
« When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,
« And trodden hard upon, is like
« The rattle-snake's, in act to strike,
« What marvel if this worn-out trunk
« Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
« The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
« I seem'd to sink upon the ground;
« But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
« My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
« And throb'd awhile, then beat no more :
« The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
« I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
« And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
« Which saw no farther : he who dies
« Can die no more than then I died.
« O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,
« I felt the blackness come and go,
« And strove to wake; but could not make
« My senses climb up from below :
« I felt as on a plank at sea,
« When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
« At the same time upheave and whelm,
« And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
« My undulating life was as
« The fancied lights that flitting pass
« Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
« Fever begins upon the brain;
« But soon it pass'd with little pain,
« But a confusion worse than such :
« I own that I should deem it much,
« Dying, to feel the same again;
« And yet I do suppose we must
« Feel far more ere we turn to dust :

- “ No matter ; I have bared my brow
- “ Full in Death’s face—before—and now.

XVI.

- “ My thoughts came back ; where was I ? Cold,
- “ And numb, and giddy : pulse by pulse
- “ Life reassumed its lingering hold,
- “ And throb by throb ; till grown a pang
- “ Which for a moment would convulse,
- “ My blood reflow’d though thick and chill ;
- “ My ear with uncouth noises rang,
- “ My heart began once more to thrill ;
- “ My sight return’d, though dim, alas !
- “ And thicken’d, as it were, with glass.
- “ Methought the dash of waves was nigh ;
- “ There was a gleam too of the sky,
- “ Studded with stars ;—it is no dream ;
- “ The wild horse swims the wilder stream !
- “ The bright broad river’s gushing tide
- “ Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
- “ And we are half-way, struggling o’er
- “ To yon unknown and silent shore.
- “ The waters broke my hollow trance,
- “ And with a temporary strength
- “ My stiffen’d limbs were rebaptized.
- “ My courser’s broad breast proudly braves,
- “ And dashes off the ascending waves,
- “ And onward we advance !
- “ We reach the slippery shore at length,
- “ A haven I but little prized,
- “ For all behind was dark and drear,
- “ And all before was night and fear.
- “ How many hours of night or day
- “ In those suspended pangs I lay,

- “ I could not tell ; I scarcely knew
- “ If this were human breath I drew.

XVII.

- “ With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
- “ And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
- “ The wild steed’s sinewy nerves still strain
- “ Up the repelling bank.
- “ We gain the top : a boundless plain
- “ Spreads through the shadow of the night,
- “ And onward, onward, onward, seems
- “ Like precipices in our dreams,
- “ To stretch beyond the sight ;
- “ And here and there a speck of white,
- “ Or scatter’d spot of dusky green,
- “ In masses broke into the light,
- “ As rose the moon upon my right.
- “ But nought distinctly seen
- “ In the dim waste, would indicate
- “ The omen of a cottage gate ;
- “ No twinkling taper from afar
- “ Stood like an hospitable star ;
- “ Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
- “ To make him merry with my woes :
- “ That very cheat had cheer’d me then !
- “ Although detected, welcome still,
- “ Reminding me, through every ill,
- “ Of the abodes of men.

XVIII.

- “ Onward we went—but slack and slow ;
- “ His savage force at length o’erspent,
- “ The drooping courser, faint and low,
- “ All feebly foaming went.

- « A sickly infant had had power
 « To guide him forward in that hour ;
 « But useless all to me.
 « His new-born tameness nought avail'd ;
 « My limbs were bound ; my force had fail'd,
 « Perchance, had they been free.
 « With feeble effort still I tried
 « To rend the bonds so starkly tied—
 « But still it was in vain ;
 « My limbs were only wrung the more,
 « And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
 « Which but prolong'd their pain :
 « The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
 « Although no goal was nearly won :
 « Some streaks announced the coming sun—
 « How slow, alas ! he came !
 « Methought that mist of dawning gray
 « Would never dapple into day ;
 « How heavily it roll'd away—
 « Before the eastern flame
 « Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
 « And call'd the radiance from their cars,
 « And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
 « With lonely lustre, all his own.

XIX.

- « Up rose the sun ; the mists were curl'd
 « Back from the solitary world
 « Which lay around—behind—before :
 « What boot'd it to traverse o'er
 « Plain, forest, river ? Man nor brute,
 « Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,

- “ Lay in the wild luxuriant soil ;
“ No sign of travel—none of toil ;
“ The very air was mute ;
“ And not an insect’s shrill small horn,
“ Nor matin bird’s new voice was borne
“ From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,
“ Panting as if his heart would burst,
“ The weary brute still stagger’d on ;
“ And still we were—or seem’d—alone :
“ At length, while reeling on our way,
“ Methought I heard a courser neigh,
“ From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
“ Is it the wind those branches stirs ?
“ No, no ! from out the forest prance
“ A trampling troop ; I see them come !
“ In one vast squadron they advance !
“ I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.
“ The steeds rush on in plunging pride ;
“ But where are they the reins to guide ?
“ A thousand horse—and none to ride !
“ With flowing tail and flying mane,
“ Wide nostrils—never stretch’d by pain,
“ Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
“ And feet that iron never shod,
“ And flanks unscarr’d by spur or rod.
“ A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
“ Like waves that follow o’er the sea,
“ Came thickly thundering on,
“ As if our faint approach to meet ;
“ The sight re-nerved my courser’s feet,
“ A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
“ A moment, with a faint low neigh,
“ He answer’d, and then fell ;

“ With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
“ And reeking limbs immoveable,
“ His first and last career is done !
“ On came the troop—they saw him stoop,
“ They saw me strangely bound along
“ His back with many a bloody thong :
“ They stop—they start—they snuff the air,
“ Gallop a moment here and there,
“ Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
“ Then plunging back with sudden bound,
“ Headed by one black mighty steed,
“ Who seem’d the patriarch of his breed,
“ Without a single speck or hair
“ Of white upon his shaggy hide ;
“ They snort—they foam—neigh—swerve aside,
“ And backward to the forest fly,
“ By instinct, from a human eye.—
“ They left me there, to my despair,
“ Link’d to the dead and stiffening wretch,
“ Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
“ Relieved from that unwonted weight,
“ From whence I could not extricate
“ Nor him nor me—and there we lay,
“ The dying on the dead !
“ I little deem’d another day
“ Would see my houseless, helpless head.
“ And there from morn till twilight bound,
“ I felt the heavy hours toil round,
“ With just enough of life to see
“ My last of suns go down on me,
“ In hopeless certainty of mind,
“ That makes us feel at length resign’d
“ To that which our foreboding years
“ Presents the worst and last of fears

- « Inevitable—even a boon,
- « Nor more unkind for coming soon ;
- « Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
- « As if it only were a snare
- « That prudence might escape :
- « At times both wish'd for and implored,
- « At times sought with self-pointed sword,
- « Yet still a dark and hideous close
- « To even intolerable woes,
- « And welcome in no shape.
- « And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
- « They who have revell'd beyond measure
- « In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
- « Die calm, or calmer oft than he
- « Whose heritage was misery :
- « For he who hath in turn run through
- « All that was beautiful and new,
- « Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave ;
- « And, save the future, (which is view'd
- « Not quite as men are base or good,
- « But as their nerves may be endued),
- « With nought perhaps to grieve :—
- « The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
- « And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
- « Appears, to his distemper'd eyes,
- « Arrived to rob him of his prize,
- « The tree of his new Paradise.
- « To-morrow would have given him all,
- « Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall ;
- « To-morrow would have been the first
- « Of days no more deplored or curst,
- « But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
- « Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,

- “ Guerdon of many a painful hour ;
- “ To-morrow would have given him power
- “ To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
- “ And must it dawn upon his grave ?

XX.

- “ The sun was sinking—still I lay
- “ Chain’d to the chill and stiffening steed,
- “ I thought to mingle there our clay ;
- “ And my dim eyes of death had need,
- “ No hope arose of being freed :
- “ I cast my last looks up the sky,
- “ And there between me and the sun
- “ I saw the expecting raven fly,
- “ Who scarce would wait till both should die
- “ Ere his repast begun ;
- “ He flew, and perch’d, then flew once more,
- “ And each time nearer than before ;
- “ I saw his wing through twilight flit,
- “ And once so near me he alit
- “ I could have smote, but lack’d the strength ;
- “ But the slight motion of my hand,
- “ And feeble scratching of the sand,
- “ The exerted throat’s faint struggling noise,
- “ Which scarcely could be call’d a voice,
- “ Together scared him off at length.—
- “ I know no more—my latest dream
- “ Is something of a lovely star
- “ Which fix’d my dull eyes from afar,
- “ And went and came with wandering beam,
- “ And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
- “ Sensation of recurring sense,
- “ And then subsiding back to death,
- “ And then again a little breath,

- “ A little thrill, a short suspense,
- “ An icy sickness curdling o’er
- “ My heart, and sparks that cross’d my brain—
- “ A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
- “ A sigh, and nothing more.

XXI.

- “ I woke—Where was I?—Do I see
- “ A human face look down on me ?
- “ And doth a roof above me close ?
- “ Do these limbs on a couch repose ?
- “ Is this a chamber where I lie?
- “ And is it mortal yon bright eye,
- “ That watches me with gentle glance ?
- “ I closed my own again once more,
- “ As doubtful that the former trance
- “ Could not as yet be o’er.
- “ A slender girl, long-hair’d, and tall,
- “ Sate watching by the cottage wall ;
- “ The sparkle of her eye I caught,
- “ Even with my first return of thought ;
- “ For ever and anon she threw
- “ A prying, pitying glance on me
- “ With her black eye so wild and free :
- “ I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
- “ No vision it could be,—
- “ But that I lived, and was released
- “ From adding to the vulture’s feast :
- “ And when the Cossack maid beheld
- “ My heavy eyes at length unseal’d,
- “ She smiled—and I essay’d to speak,
- “ But fail’d—and she approach’d, and made
- “ With lip and finger signs that said,
- “ I must not strive as yet to break

“ The silence, till my strength should be
“ Enough to leave my accents free ;
“ And then her hand on mine she laid,
“ And smooth’d the pillow for my head,
“ And stole along on tiptoe tread,
“ And gently oped the door, and spake
“ In whispers—ne’er was voice so sweet !
“ Even music follow’d her light feet ;—
“ But those she call’d were not awake,
“ And she went forth ; but, ere she pass’d,
“ Another look on me she cast,
“ Another sign she made, to say
“ That I had nought to fear, that all
“ Were near, at my command or call,
“ And she would not delay
“ Her due return :—while she was gone,
“ Methought I felt too much alone.

XXII.

“ She came with mother and with sire—
“ What need of more ?—I will not tire
“ With long recital of the rest,
“ Since I became the Cossacks’ guest :
“ They found me senseless on the plain—
“ They bore me to the nearest hut—
“ They brought me into life again—
“ Me—one day o’er their realm to reign !
“ Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
“ His rage, refining on my pain,
“ Sent me forth to the wilderness,
“ Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
“ To pass the desart to a throne.—
“ What mortal his own doom may guess ?—
“ Let none despond, let none despair !

« To-morrow the Borystheneſes
« May ſee our courſers graze at eaſe
« Upon his Turkiſh bank,—and never
« Had I ſuch welcome for a river
« As I ſhall yield when ſafely there.
« Comrades, good night ! »—The Hetman thro'
His length beneath the oak-tree ſhade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortleſs nor new
To him, who took his reſt whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where :—
His eyes the haſtening ſlumbers ſteep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wonder'd not,—
The king had been an hour aſleep.

THE
PRISONER OF CHILLON.
A FABLE.



SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL spirit of the chainless mind !

Brightest in dungeons, Liberty ! thou art,

For there thy habitation is the heart—

The heart which love of thee alone can bind ;

And when thy sons to fetters are consigned—

To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,

Their country conquers with their martyrdom,

And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,

And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,

Until his very steps have left a trace

Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,

By Bonnivard ! '—May none those marks efface !

For they appeal from tyranny to God.



THE
PRISONER OF CHILLON.

I.

MY hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,²
As men's have grown from sudden fears :
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare ;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death ;
That father perish'd at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake ;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place.
We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finish'd as they had begun,
Proud of persecution's rage ;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have seal'd ;

Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied ;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II.

There are seven pillars of gothic mold,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old ;
There are seven columns, massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left ;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp :
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain ;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score,
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III.

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone,
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,

But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight;
And thus together—yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but pined in heart;
'Twas still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each,
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon-stone,
 A grating sound—not full and free
 As they of yore were wont to be :
 It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV.

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did my best—
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him—with eyes as blue as heaven,
For him my soul was sorely moved;
And truly might it be distrest
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,

Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun :
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V.

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind ;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perish'd in the foremost rank
With joy :—but not in chains to pine :
His spirit withered with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—
And so perchance in sooth did mine ;
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had followed there the deer and wolf ;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

VI.

Lake Lemán lies by Chillon's walls :
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow ;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,³
Which round about the wave enthralls :

A double dungeon wall and wave .
Have made—and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day ;
 Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd ;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky ;
 And then the very rock hath rock'd,
 And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
Because I could have smiled to see
The Death that would have set me free.

VII.

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loath'd and put away his food ;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care :
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captive's tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den :
But what were these to us or him ?
These wasted not his heart or limb ;
My brother's soul was of that mold
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side ;
But why delay the truth?—he died.

I saw and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died—and they unlocked his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laugh'd—and laid him there :
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love ;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument !

VIII.

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free ;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.

Oh God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood :—
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion ;
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread :
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow :
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind ;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray—
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most ;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less :
I listened, but I could not hear—
I called, for I was wild with fear ;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished ;

I called, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rush'd to him :—I found him not :
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only lived—*I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew ;
The last—the sole—the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers— both had ceased to breathe :
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill ;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.

I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX.

What next befell me then and there
I know not well—I never knew—
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too :
I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist ;

For all was blank, and bleak, and grey,
It was not night—it was not day,
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good—no crime—
But silence, and a stirless breath,
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X.

A light broke in upon my brain,—
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard;
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track,
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before;
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done;
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree :
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,

And seem'd to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more!
It seem'd like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine;
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in winged guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile,
I sometimes deemed that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal—well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone,—
Lone—as the corse within its shroud,
Lone—as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear;
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI.

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate,

I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was :—my broken chain
With links unfasten'd did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part ;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod ;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

XH.

I made a footing in the wall ;
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all
Who loved me in a human shape ;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me :
No child—no sire—no kin had I,
No partner in my misery ;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad ;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barr'd windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII.

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame ;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow ;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush ;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down ;
And then there was a little isle,⁴
Which in my very face did smile,

The only one in view ;

A small green isle, it seem'd no more
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.

The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all ;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly,
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain ;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load ;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,

And yet my glance, too much oppress,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV.

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count—I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free,
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be:

I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home :
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell—
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are :—Even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

NOTES.

Note 1, page 141, ligne 13.

By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface!

François de Bonnivard, fils de Louis de Bonnivard, originaire de Seyssel et seigneur de Lunes, naquit en 1496; il fit ses études à Turin : en 1510 Jean-Aimé de Bonnivard, son oncle, lui résigna le prieuré de Saint-Victor, qui aboutissait aux murs de Genève et qui formait un bénéfice considérable.

Ce grand homme (Bonnivard mérite ce titre par la force de son âme, la droiture de son cœur, la noblesse de ses intentions, la sagesse de ses conseils, le courage de ses démarches, l'étendue de ses connaissances et la vivacité de son esprit), ce grand homme, qui excitera l'admiration de tous ceux qu'une vertu héroïque peut encore émouvoir, inspirera encore la plus vive reconnaissance dans les cœurs des Genevois qui aiment Genève; Bonnivard en fut toujours un des plus fermes appuis : pour assurer la liberté de notre république, il ne craignit pas de perdre souvent la sienne; il oublia son repos; il méprisa ses richesses; il ne négligea rien pour affermir le bonheur d'une patrie qu'il honora de son choix; dès ce moment il la chérit comme le plus zélé de ses concitoyens; il la servit avec l'intrépidité d'un héros, et il écrivit son Histoire avec la naïveté d'un philosophe et la chaleur d'un patriote.

Il dit dans le commencement de son Histoire de Genève, que, *dès qu'il eut commencé de lire l'histoire des nations, il se sentit entraîné par son goût pour les républiques, dont il épousa toujours les intérêts* : c'est ce goût pour la liberté qui lui fit sans doute adopter Genève pour sa patrie.

Bonnivard, encore jeune, s'annonça hautement comme le défenseur de Genève contre le duc de Savoie et l'Évêque.

En 1519, Bonnivard devint le martyr de sa patrie : le

duc de Savoye étant entré dans Genève avec cinq cents hommes, Bonnivard craignit le ressentiment du duc ; il voulut se retirer à Fribourg pour en éviter les suites ; mais il fut trahi par deux hommes qui l'accompagnaient, et conduit par ordre du prince à Grolée, où il resta prisonnier pendant deux ans. Bonnivard était malheureux dans ses voyages : comme ses malheurs n'avaient point ralenti son zèle pour Genève, il était toujours un ennemi redoutable pour ceux qui la menaçaient, et par conséquent il devait être exposé à leurs coups. Il fut rencontré en 1530 sur le Jura, par des voleurs, qui le dépouillèrent, et qu'il mit encore entre les mains du duc de Savoye : ce prince le fit enfermer dans le château de Chillon, où il resta sans être interrogé jusqu'en 1536 ; il fut alors délivré par les Bernois, qui s'emparèrent du Pays de Vaud.

Bonnivard, en sortant de sa captivité, eut le plaisir de trouver Genève libre et réformée : la république s'empressa de lui témoigner sa reconnaissance et de le dédommager des maux qu'il avait soufferts ; elle le reçut bourgeois de la ville au mois de juin 1536 ; elle lui donna la maison habitée autrefois par le vicaire-général, et elle lui assigna une pension de 200 écus d'or tant qu'il séjournerait à Genève. Il fut admis dans le conseil des Deux-Cents en 1537.

Bonnivard continua d'être utile : après avoir travaillé à rendre Genève libre, il réussit à la rendre tolérante. Bonnivard engagea le conseil à accorder aux ecclésiastiques et aux paysans un temps suffisant pour examiner les propositions qu'on leur faisait ; il réussit par sa douceur : on prêche toujours le christianisme avec succès quand on le prêche avec charité.

Bonnivard fut savant ; ses manuscrits, qui sont dans la bibliothèque publique, prouvent qu'il avait bien lu les auteurs classiques latins, et qu'il avait approfondi la théologie et l'histoire. Ce grand homme aimait les sciences, et il croyait qu'elles pouvaient faire la gloire de Genève ; aussi il ne négligea rien pour les fixer dans cette ville naissante ; en 1551 il donna sa bibliothèque au public ; elle fut le commencement de notre bibliothèque publique ; et ses livres sont en partie les rares et belles éditions du quinzième siècle qu'on voit dans notre collection. Enfin, pendant la même

année, ce bon patriote institua la république son héritière, à condition qu'elle emploierait ses biens à entretenir le collège dont on projetait la fondation.

Il paraît que Bonnivard mourut en 1570; mais on ne peut l'assurer, parce qu'il y a une lacune dans le nécrologe depuis le mois de juillet 1570 jusqu'en 1571.

Note 2, p. 143, line 3.

In a single night.

Ludovico Sforza, and others — The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis XVI, though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect: to such, and not to fear, this change in *her's* was to be attributed.

Note 3, p. 146, line 26.

From Chillon's snow-white battlement.

The Chateau de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the Heights of Melleirie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St. Gingo.

Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent; below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet (French measure); within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered: in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces — he was confined here several years.

It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his Heloise, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death.

The chateau is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.

Note 4, page 154, line 10.

And then there was a little isle.

Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees, (I think not above three,) and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

When the foregoing poem was composed I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavoured to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. Some account of his life will be found in a note appended to the « Sonnet on Chillon, » with which I have been furnished by the kindness of a citizen of that republic which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom.

SONNET.

ROUSSEAU—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and de Staël—
Leman (1)! these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these, wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recall :
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous ; but by *thee*
How much more, Lake of Beauty ! do we feel,
In sweetly glidding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real !

(1) Geneva, Ferney, Coppet, Lausanne.

THE
LAMENT OF TASSO.

AT Ferrara (in the library) are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's *Gerusalemme*, and of Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto; and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house of the latter. But as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the cotemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto—at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed and depopulated; the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.

THE
LAMENT OF TASSO.

I.

LONG years!—It tries the thrilling frame to bear
And eagle-spirit of a Child of Song—
Long years of outrage, calumny and wrong ;
Imputed madness, prisoned solitude,
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart ; and the abhorred grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain ;
And bare, at once, Captivity displayed
Stands scoffing through the never-opened gate,
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day
And tasteless food, which I have eat alone
Till its unsocial bitterness is gone ;
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
Which is my lair, and—it may be—my grave.
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair ;
For I have battled with mine agony,
And made me wings wherewith to overfly
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall ;

And revelled among men and things divine,
And poured my spirit over Palestine,
In honour of the sacred war for him,
The God who was on earth and is in heaven,
For he hath strengthened me in heart and limb.
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
I have employed my penance to record
How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.

II.

But this is o'er—my pleasant task is done :—
My long-sustaining friend of many years !
If I do blot thy final page with tears,
Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.
But thou, my young creation ! my soul's child !
Which ever playing round me came and smiled,
And wooed me from myself with thy sweet sight,
Thou too art gone—and so is my delight :
And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
Thou too art ended—what is left me now ?
For I have anguish yet to bear—and how ?
I know not that—but in the innate force
Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,
Nor cause for such : they called me mad—and why
Oh Leonora ! wilt not *thou* reply ?
I was indeed delirious in my heart
To lift my love so lofty as thou art ;
But still my frenzy was not of the mind ;
I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
Not less because I suffer it unbent.
That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind ;

But let them go, or torture as they will,
 My heart can multiply thine image still ;
 Successful love may sate itself away,
 The wretched are the faithful ; 'tis their fate
 To have all feeling save the one decay,
 And every passion into one dilate,
 As rapid rivers into ocean pour ;
 But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III.

Above me, hark ! the long and maniac cry
 Of minds and bodies in captivity.
 And hark ! the lash and the increasing howl,
 And the half-inarticulate blasphemy !
 There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,
 Some who do still goad on the o'er-laboured mind,
 And dim the little light that's left behind
 With needless torture, as their tyrant will
 Is wound up to the lust of doing ill :
 With these and with their victims am I classed,
 'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have passed ;
 'Mid sights and sounds like these my life may close :
 So let it be—for then I shall repose.

IV.

I have been patient, let me be so yet ;
 I had forgotten half I would forget,
 But it revives—oh ! would it were my lot
 'To be forgetful as I am forgot !—
 Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell
 In this vast lazar-house of many woes ?
 Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,
 Nor words a language, nor ev'n men mankind ;

Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,
And each is tortured in his separate hell—
For we are crowded in our solitudes—
Many, but each divided by the wall,
Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods;—
While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call—
None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,
Who was not made to be the mate of these,
Nor bound between distraction and disease.
Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?
Who have debased me in the minds of men,
Debarring me the usage of my own,
Blighting my life in best of its career,
Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?
Would I not pay them back these pangs again,
And teach them inward sorrow's stifled groan?
The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,
Which undermines our stoical success?
No—still too proud to be vindictive—I
Have pardoned princes' insults, and would die.
Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake
I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
It hath no business where *thou* art a guest;
Thy brother hates—but I can not detest;
Thou pitiest not—but I cannot forsake.

V.

Look on a love which knows not to despair,
But all unquenched is still my better part,
Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart
As dwells the gathered lightning in its cloud,
Encompassed with its dark and rolling shroud,
Till struck,—forth flies the all-etherial dart!

And thus at the collision of thy name
The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,
And for a moment all things as they were
Flit by me ;—they are gone—I am the same.
And yet my love without ambition grew ;
I knew thy state, my station, and I knew
A princess was no love-mate for a bard ;
I told it not, I breathed it not, it was
Sufficient to itself, its own reward ;
And if my eyes revealed it, they, alas !
Were punished by the silentness of thine,
And yet I did not venture to repine.
Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,
Worshipped at holy distance, and around
Hallowed and meekly kissed the saintly ground ;
Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love
Had robed thee with a glory, and arrayed
Thy lineaments in beauty that dismayed—
Oh ! not dismayed—but awed, like One above—
And in that sweet severity there was
A something which all softness did surpass—
I know not how—thy genius mastered mine—
My star stood still before thee :—if it were
Presumptuous thus to love without design,
That sad fatality hath cost me dear ;
But thou art dearest still, and I should be
Fit for this cell, which wrongs me, but for *thee*.
The very love which locked me to my chain
Hath lightened half its weight ; and for the rest,
Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,
And look to thee with undivided breast,
And foil the ingenuity of pain.

VI.

It is no marvel—from my very birth
My soul was drunk with love, which did pervade
And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth ;
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dreamed uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering ; and the wise
Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said
Of such materials wretched men were made,
And such a truant boy would end in woe,
And that the only lesson was a blow ;
And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt
Returned and wept alone, and dreamed again
The visions which arise without a sleep.
And with my years my soul began to pant
With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain ;
And the whole heart exhaled into one want,
But undefined and wandering, till the day
I found the thing I sought—and that was thee ;
And then I lost my being all to be
Absorbed in thine—the world was past away—
Thou didst annihilate the earth to me !

VII.

I loved all solitude—but little thought
To spend I know not what of life, remote
From all communion with existence, save
The maniac and his tyrant ; had I been

Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
 My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave,
 But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave?
 Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
 Than the wrecked sailor on his desert shore;
 The world is all before him—*mine* is *here*,
 Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier.
 What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye,
 And with a dying glance upbraid the sky—
 I will not raise my own in such reproof,
 Although 'tis clouded by my dungeon roof.

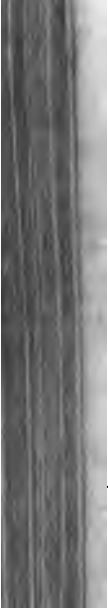
VIII.

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,
 But with a sense of its decay :—I see
 Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
 And a strange demon, who is vexing me
 With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below
 The feeling of the healthful and the free;
 But much to One, who long hath suffered so,
 Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
 And all that may be borne, or can debase.
 I thought mine enennies had been but man,
 But spirits may be leagued with them—all Earth
 Abandons—Heaven forgets me ;—in the dearth
 Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,
 It may be, tempt me further, and prevail
 Against the outworn creature they assail.
 Why in this furnace is my spirit proved
 Like steel in tempering fire? because I loved?
 Because I loved what not to love, and see,
 Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

IX.

I once was quick in feeling—that is o'er ;—
My scars are callous, or I should have dashed
My brain against these bars as the sun flashed
In mockery through them ;—if I bear and bore
The much I have recounted, and the more
Which hath no words, 'tis that I would not die
And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie
Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame
Stamp madness deep into my memory,
And woo compassion to a blighted name,
Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.
No—it shall be immortal !—and I make
A future temple of my present cell,
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.
While thou, Ferrara ! when no longer dwell
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,
And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearthless halls,
A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown,
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled walls!
And thou, Leonora ! thou—who wert ashamed
That such as I could love—who blushed to hear
'To less than monarchs that thou could'st be dear,
Go ! tell thy brother that my heart, untamed
By grief, years, weariness—and it may be
A taint of that he would impute to me—
From long infection of a den like this,
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,
Adores thee still ;—and add—that when the towers
And battlements which guard his joyous hours

Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,
Or left untended in a dull repose,
This—this shall be a consecrated spot !
But Thou—when all that Birth and Beauty throws
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have
One half the laurel which o’ershades my grave.
No power in death can tear our names apart,
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.
Yes, Leonora ! it shall be our fate
To be entwined for ever—but too late !



VARIOUS POEMS.



A

SKETCH FROM PRIVATE LIFE.

« Honest—Honest Iago!

« If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee. »

SHAKESPEARE.

BORN in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
Next—for some gracious service unexpressed,
And from its wages only to be guess'd—
Rais'd from the toilet to the table,—where
Her wondering betters wait behind her chair,
With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.
Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie—
The genial confidante, and general spy—
Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess—
An only infant's earliest governess!
She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
That she herself, by teaching, learned to spell.
An adept next in penmanship she grows,
As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
What she had made the pupil of her art,
None know—but that high soul secured the heart,
And panted for the truth it could not hear,
With longing breast and undeluded ear.

Foild was perversion by that youthful mind,
Which flattery fool'd not—baseness could not blind,

Deceit infect not—nor contagion soil—
 Indulgence weaken—nor example spoil—
 Nor master'd science tempt her to look down
 On humbler talents with a pitying frown—
 Nor Genius swell—nor Beauty render vain—
 Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain—
 Nor Fortune change—Pride raise—nor Passion bow,
 Nor Virtue teach austerity—till now.
 Serenely purest of her sex that live,
 But wanting one sweet weakness—to forgive ;
 Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,
 She deems that all could be like her below :
 Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
 For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme :—now laid aside too long,
 The baleful burthen of this honest song—
 Though all her former functions are no more,
 She rules the circle which she served before.
 If mothers—none know why—before her quake ;
 If daughters dread her for the mother's sake ;
 If early habits—those false links, which bind
 At times the loftiest to the meanest mind—
 Have given her power too deeply to instil
 The angry essence of her deadly will ;
 If, like a snake, she steal within your walls,
 Till the black slime betray her as she crawls ;
 If, like a viper, to the heart she wind,
 And leave the venom there she did not find ;
 What marvel that this hag of hatred works
 Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
 To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
 And reign the Hecate of domestic hells ?

Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
With all the kind mendacity of hints,
While mingling truth with falsehood—sneers with smiles—
A thread of candour with a web of wiles;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,
To hide her bloodless heart's soul—harden'd scheming,
A lip of lies—a face formed to conceal;
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel:
With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown;
A cheek of parchment—and an eye of stone.
Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,
Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale—
(For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
Congenial colours in that soul or face)—
Look on her features! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined:
Look on the picture! deem it not o'ercharged—
There is no trait which might not be enlarged;—
Yet true to « Nature's journeymen, » who made
This monster when their mistress left off trade,—
This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh! wretch without a tear—without a thought,
Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought—
The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crushed affections light
Back on thy bosom with reflected blight!

And make thee in thy leprosy of mind
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind?
Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black—as thy will for others would create :
Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.
Oh! may thy grave be sleepless as the bed,—
The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread !
'Then, when thou fain would'st weary Heaven with pra
Look on thine earthly victims—and despair !
Down to the dust!—and, as thou rott'st away,
Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would tear—
'Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er thy less abhorred compeers—
And festering in the infamy of years.

March 30, 1816.

MONODY

ON THE DEATH OF R. B. SHERIDAN.

Spoken at DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes,
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
A holy concord—and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?
'Tis not harsh sorrow—but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,
Felt without bitterness—but full and clear,
A sweet dejection—a transparent tear
Unmixed with worldly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame—and secret without pain.
Even as the tenderness that hour instills
When Summer's day declines along the hills,
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of Genius which can perish dies.
A mighty Spirit is eclipsed—a Power
Hath passed from day to darkness—to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeathed—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!

The flash of Wit—the bright Intelligence,
The beam of Song—the blaze of Eloquence,
Set with their sun—but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal Mind ;
Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,
Which all embraced—and lightened over all,
To cheer—to pierce—to please—or to appal.
From the charmed council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord ;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised—the proud—who made his praise their pride.

When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder—his the avenging rod,
The wrath—the delegated voice of God !
Which shook the nations through his lips—and blazed
Till vanquished senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh ! here, where yet all young and warm
The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue—the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit ;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring ;
These wondrous beings of his fancy, wrought
To fulness by the *fiat* of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat ;
A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight,
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,
Still let them pause—Ah ! little do they know
That what to them seemed vice might be but woe.
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fixed for ever to detract or praise ;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel—accuser—judge—and spy,
The foe—the fool—the jealous—and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in other's pain,
Behold the host ! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the pyramid of calumny !

These are his portion—but if joined to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,
If the high Spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,
To sooth Indignity—and face to face
Meet sordid Rage—and wrestle with Disgrace,
To find in Hope but the renewed caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness;—
If such may be the ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail ?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given
Bear hearts electric—charged with fire from Heaven,

Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turned to thunder—scorch—and
 burst.

But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be—if such have ever been ;
Our's be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanished beam—and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.

Ye orators ! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran hero of your field !
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three* !
Whose words were sparks of immortality !
Ye Bards ! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your master—emulate him *here* !
Ye men of wit and social eloquence !
He was your brother—bear his ashes hence !
While powers of mind almost of boundless range,
Complete in kind—as various in their change,
While Eloquence—Wit—Poesy—and Mirth,
That humbler harmonist of care on Earth,
Survive within our souls—while lives our sense
Of pride in merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness—long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature formed but one such man,
And broke the die—in moulding SHERIDAN !

TO THYRZA.

I.

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah, wherefore art thou lowly laid?
By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain;
The past, the future fled to thee
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again!
Could this have been—a word, a look
That softly said, "We part in peace,"
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.
And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?
Oh! who like him had watched thee here?
Or sadly marked thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere Death appear,
When silent Sorrow fears to sigh,
Till all was past? But when no more
'Twas thine to reckon of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flowed as fast—as now they flow.
Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere called but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?

Ours too the glance none saw beside ;
The smile none else might understand ;
The whispered thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand ;
The kiss so guiltless and refined
That Love each warmer wish forbore ;
Those eyes proclaimed so pure a mind ;
Ev'n passion blushed to plead for more.
The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee, to repine ;
The song celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine ;
The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
But where is thine ?—ah ! where art thou ?
Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now !
Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain.
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again ;
But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.
Teach me—too early taught by thee !
To bear, forgiving and forgiv'n :
On earth thy love was such to me ;
It fain would form my hope in heav'n !

TO THE SAME.

II.

1.

AWAY, away, ye notes of woe !
Be silent thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence, for, oh !
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days—
But lull the chords, for now, alas !
I must not think, I may not gaze
On what I am, on what I was.

2.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
Is hushed, and all their charms are fled ;
And now their softest notes repeat
A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead !
Yes, Thyrza ! yes, they breathe of thee,
Beloved dust ! since dust thou art ;
And all that once was harmony
Is worse than discord to my heart !

3.

'Tis silent all !—but on my ear
The well-remembered echoes thrill ;
I hear a voice I would not hear,
A voice that now might well be still,
Yet oft my doubting soul 'twill shake :
Ev'n slumber owns its gentle tone,
Till consciousness will vainly wake
To listen, though the dream be flown.

4.

Sweet Thyrza! waking as in sleep,
Thou art but now a lovely dream;
A star that trembled o'er the deep,
Then turned from earth its tender beam.
But he, who through life's dreary way
Must pass, when heav'n is veiled in wrath,
Will long lament the vanished ray
That scattered gladness o'er his path.

TO THE SAME.

III.

1.

ONE struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in twain;
One last long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again.
It suits me well to mingle now
With things that never pleased before:
Though every joy is fled below,
What future grief can touch me more?

2.

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring;
Man was not formed to live alone:
I'll be that light unmeaning thing
That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
It was not thus in days more dear,
It never would have been, but thou
Hast fled, and left me lonely here;
Thou'rt nothing, all are nothing now.

3.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill ;
Though pleasure fires the madd'ning soul ,
The heart—the heart is lonely still !

4.

On many a lone and lovely night
It soothed to gaze upon the sky ;
For then I deemed the heav'nly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye ;
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
« Now Thyrza gazes on that moon—»
Alas ! it gleamed upon her grave.

5.

When stretched on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
« 'Tis comfort still, » I faintly said,
« That Thyrza cannot know my pains : »
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 'tis idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrza ceased to live !

6.

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new !
How different now thou meet'st my gaze !
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue !

The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah! were mine as still!
Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

7.

Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!
Though painful, welcome to my breast!
Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou'rt prest!
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallowed when its hope is fled:
Oh! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead?

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone
Some name arrests the passer-by;
Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,
May mine attract thy pensive eye!

And when by thee that name is read,
Perchance in some succeeding year,
Reflect on me as on the dead,
And think my heart is buried here.

September 14th, 1809

STANZAS

Composed October 11th, 1809, during the night, a thunder-storm ; when the guides had lost the road to Zitza, near the range of mountains formerly called Pindus, in Albania.

CHILL and mirk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise,
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,
But show where rocks our path have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom—
How welcome were its shade!—ah! no!
'Tis but a Turkish tomb.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls
I hear a voice exclaim—
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

A shot is fired—by foe or friend?
Another—'tis to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend,
And lead us where they dwell.

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

And who that heard our shouts would rise
To try the dubious road?
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad.

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh! dreadful hour!
More fiercely pours the storm?
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

While wand'ring through each broken path,
O'er brake and craggy brow;
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou?

Not on the sea, not on the sea,
Thy bark hath long been gone:
Oh! may the storm that pours on me,
Bow down my head alone!

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I press'd thy lip;
And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impelled thy gallant ship.

Now thou art safe; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain;
'Twere hard if ought so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped;

Do thou amidst the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times from out her latticed halls
Look o'er the dark blue sea ;

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endeared by days gone by ;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half formed tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace,

Again thou'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery ;
Nor own for once thou thought'st of one
Who ever thinks on thee.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When severed hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.

FAREWELL.

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal availed on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh :
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word—Farewell!—Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry;
But in my breast, and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel;
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell! Farewell!

TO A YOUTHFUL FRIEND.

Few years have passed since thou and I
Were firmest friends, at least in name,
And childhood's gay sincerity
Preserved our feelings long the same.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st
What trifles oft the heart recall ;
And those who once have loved the most,
Too soon forget they loved at all.

And such the change the heart displays,
So frail is early friendship's reign,
A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,
Will view thy mind estranged again.

If so, it never shall be mine
To mourn the loss of such a heart ;
The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,
Which made thee fickle as thou art.

As rolls the Ocean's changing tide,
So human feelings ebb and flow ;
And who would in a breast confide
Where stormy passions ever glow ?

It boots not, that together bred,
Our childish days were days of joy ;
My spring of life has quickly fled ;
Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

And when we are alone in youth,
 Heaves in the agonies world's confusion,
 We seek a long interval to rest,
 That world's confusion be no more.

At the dawn of dawn, when the sun
 Shows all things brightly and to be :
 When thought is free and unconstrained,
 And sparks in the planet's eye.

And so it goes in man's mature years,
 When man himself is but a fool :
 When reason sways our hopes and fears,
 And all must love and hate by rule.

With fools in kindred vice the same,
 We learn at length our faults to blend,
 And those, and those alone may claim
 The prostituted name of friend.

Such is the common lot of man :
 Can we then 'scape from folly free ?
 Can we reverse the general plan,
 Nor be what all in turn must be ?

No, for myself, so dark my fate
 Through every turn of life hath been ;
 Man and the world I so much hate,
 I care not when I quit the scene.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,
 Wilt shine awhile and pass away ;
 As glow-worms sparkle through the night,
 But dare not stand the test of day.

Alas! whenever folly calls
Where parasites and princes meet,
(For cherished first in royal halls,
The welcome vices kindly greet),

E'en now thou'rt nightly seen to add
One insect to the fluttering crowd;
And still thy trifling heart is glad
To join the vain and court the proud.

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,
Still simpering on with eager haste,
As flies along the gay parterre,
That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame
Which seems, as marshy vapours move,
To flit along from dame to dame,
An ignis-fatuus gleam of love?

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,
Will deign to own a kindred care?
Who will debase his manly mind
For friendship every fool may share?

In time forbear; amidst the throng
No more so base a thing be seen;
No more so idly pass along:
Be something, any thing, but—mean.

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

ABSENT or present, still to thee,
My friend, what magic spells belong !
As all can tell, who share, like me,
In turn thy converse; and thy song.
But when the dreaded hour shall come
By friendship ever deemed too nigh,
And « MEMORY » o'er her Druid's tomb
Shall sweep that aught of thee can die,
How fondly will She then repay
Thy homage offered at her shrine,
And blend, while Ages roll away,
Her name immortally with thine !

April 19th, 1812.

ON A CORNELIAN HEART

WHICH WAS BROKEN.

ILL-FATED Heart ! and can it be
That thou should'st thus be rent in twain ?
Have years of care for thine and thee
Alike been all employed in vain ?

Yet precious seems each shattered part,
And every fragment dearer grown,
Since he who wears thee, feels thou art
A fitter emblem of *his own*.

TRANSLATION
OF
A ROMAIC LOVE SONG.

Alas ! Love was never yet without
The pang, the agony, the doubt,
Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,
While day and night roll darkling by.

Without one friend to hear my woe,
I faint, I die beneath the blow.
That Love had arrows, well I knew ;
Alas ! I find them poisoned too.

Birds, yet in freedom, shun the net
Which Love around your haunts hath set ;
Or circled by his fatal fire,
Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

A bird of free and careless wing
Was I, through many a smiling spring ;
But caught within the subtle snare,
I burn, and feebly flutter there.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain,
The cold repulse, the look askance,
The lightning of Love's angry glance.

In flattering dreams I deemed thee mine ;
Now hope, and he who hoped, decline ;
Like melting wax, or withering flower,
I feel my passion, and thy power.

My light of life ! ah ! tell me why
That pouting lip, and altered eye ?
My bird of love ! my beauteous mate !
And art thou changed, and can'st thou hate ?

Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow :
What wretch with me would barter woe ?
My bird ! relent : one note could give
A charm, to bid thy lover live.

My curdling blood, my madd'ning brain,
In silent anguish I sustain ;
And still thy heart, without partaking
One pang, exults—while mine is breaking.

Pour me the poison ; fear not thou !
Thou can'st not murder more than now :
I've lived to curse my natal day,
And Love, that thus can lingering slay.

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,
Can patience preach thee into rest ?
Alas ! too late, I dearly know,
That joy is harbinger of woe.

STANZAS TO ***.

1.

If sometimes in the haunts of men
Thine image from my breast may fade,
The lonely hour presents again
The semblance of thy gentle shade :
And now that sad and silent hour
Thus much of thee can still restore,
And sorrow unobserved may pour
The plaint she dare not speak before.

2.

Oh ! pardon that in crowds awhile,
I waste one thought I owe to thee,
And, self-condemned, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy memory !
Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine,
I would not fools should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

3.

If not the goblet pass unquaffed,
It is not drained to banish care,
The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
That brings a Lethe for despair.
And could Oblivion set my soul
From all her troubled visions free,
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drowned a single thought of thee.

4.

For wert thou vanished from my mind,
Where could my vacant bosom turn ?
And who would then remain behind
To honour thine abandoned urn ?
No, no—it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil ;
Though all the world forget beside,
'Tis meet that I remember still.

5.

For well I know, that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now
Unmourned shall quit this mortal scene,
Where none regarded him, but thou :
And, oh ! I feel in *that* was given
A blessing never meant for me ;
Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven,
For earthly Love to merit thee.

March 14th, 1812

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE

SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA. (1)

1.

THE Moorish King rides up and down
Through Granada's Royal town,
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.

Woe is me, Alhama!

2.

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell;
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.

Woe is me, Alhama!

3.

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin,
To the Alhambra spurring in.

Woe is me, Alhama!

(1) The effect of the original ballad (which existed both Spanish and Arabic) was such that it was forbidden to be sung by the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada.

4.

When the Alhambra walls he gained,
On the moment he ordained
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.

Woe is me, Alhama!

5.

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain,

Woe is me, Alhama!

6.

Then the Moors by this aware
That bloody Mars recalled them there,
One by one, and two by two,
In increasing squadrons flew.

Woe is me, Alhama!

7.

Out then spake an aged Moor
In these words the king before,
• Wherefore call on us, oh King!
• What may mean this gathering? »

Woe is me, Alhama!

8.

• Friends! ye have, alas! to know
• Of a most disastrous blow,
• That the Christians, stern and bold,
• Have obtained Alhama's hold.

Woe is me, Alhama!

9.

Out then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see,
« Good King! thou art justly served,
« Good King! this thou hast deserved.
Woe is me, Alhama!

10.

« By thee were slain, in evil hour,
« The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
« And strangers were received by thee
« Of Cordova the chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama!

11.

« And for this, oh King! is sent
« On thee a double chastisement,
« Thee and thine, thy crown and realm
« One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

12.

« He who holds no laws in awe,
« He must perish by the law;
« And Granada must be won,
« And thyself with her undone. »
Woe is me, Alhama!

13.

Fire flashed from out the old Moor's eyes,
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answered, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama!

14.

« There is no law to say such things
« As may disgust the ear of kings : »—
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doomed him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama !

15.

Moor Alfaqui ! Moor Alfaqui !
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.
Woe is me, Alhama !

16.

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone ;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama !

17.

« Cavalier ! and man of worth !
« Let these words of mine go forth ;
« Let the Moorish Monarch know,
« That to him I nothing owe :
Woe is me, Alhama !

18.

« But on my soul Alhama weighs,
« And on my inmost spirit preys ;
« And if the King his land hath lost,
« Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama !

19.

« Sires have lost their children, wives
« Their lords, and valiant men their lives;
« One what best his love might claim
« Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.

Woe is me, Alhama!

20.

« I lost a damsel in that hour,
« Of all the land the loveliest flower;
« Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
« And think her ransom cheap that day. »

Woe is me, Alhama!

21.

And as these things the old Moor said,
They severed from the trunk his head;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'Twas carried, as the King decreed.

Woe is me, Alhama!

22.

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep,
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.

Woe is me, Alhama!

23.

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.

Woe is me, Alhama!

STANZAS

Written in passing the Ambracian Gulph,
November 14th, 1809.

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast :
And on these waves, for Egypt's Queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Roman ;
Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

Florence ! whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung,
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell)
Whilst thou art fair and I am young ;

Sweet Florence ! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes :
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Anthonies,

Though fate forbids such things to be,
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curled,
I cannot lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.

ADDRESS

Spoken at the opening of DRURY-LANE THEATRE,
Saturday, October 10th, 1812.

IN one dread night our city saw, and sighed,
Bowed to the dust, the Drama's tower of pride ;
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.

Ye who beheld, (oh ! sight admired and mourned,
Whose radiance mocked the ruin it adorned !)
Through clouds of fire, the massy fragments riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven ;
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,
While thousands, thronged around the burning dome,
Shrank back appalled, and trembled for their home,
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly shone
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own,
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall
Usurped the Muse's realm, and marked her fall ;
Say—shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,
Reared where once rose the mightiest in our isle,
Know the same favour which the former knew,
A shrine for Shakspeare—worthy him and *you* ?

Yes—it shall be—the magic of that name
Defies the scythe of Time, the torch of flame ;

On the same spot still consecrates the scene,
 And bids the Drama *be* where she hath *been* :
 This fabric's birth attests the potent spell—
 Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How well !*

As soars this fane to emulate the last,
 Oh ! might we draw our omens from the past,
 Some hour propitious to our prayers may boast
 Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
 On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
 O'erwhelmed the gentlest, stormed the sternest heart.
 On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew ;
 Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,
 Sighed his last thanks, and wept his last adieu :
 But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom
 That only waste their odours o'er the tomb. .
 Such Drury claimed and claims—nor you refuse
 One tribute to revive his slumbering muse ;
 With garlands deck your own Menander's head !
 Nor hoard your honours idly for the dead !

Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
 Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write.
 Heirs to their labours, like all high-born heirs,
 Vain of *our*' ancestry as they of *theirs* ;
 While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's glass
 To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
 And we the mirror hold, where imaged shine
 Immortal names, emblazoned on our line,
 Pause—ere their feebler offspring you condemn,
 Reflect how hard the task to rival them !

Friends of the stage ! to whom both Players and Play
 Must sue alike for pardon, or for praise,

Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
The boundless power to cherish or reject ;
If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
And made us blush that you forbore to blame ;
If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
To sooth the sickly taste it dare not mend,
All past reproach may present scenes refute,
And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute !
Oh ! since your *fiat* stamps the Drama's laws,
Forbear to mock us with misplaced applause ;
So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's powers,
And reason's voice be echoed back by ours !

'This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obeyed,
The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
Receive *our* welcome too, whose every tone
Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.
The curtain rises—may our stage unfold
Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old !
Briton's our judges, Nature for our guide,
Still may *we* please—long, long may *you* preside !

STANZAS

Written after swimming from SESTOS to ABYDOS,
1810.

If, in the month of dark December,
Leander, who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont !

If, when the wintry tempest roared,
He sped to Hero, nothing loth,
And thus of old thy current poured,
Fair Venus ! how I pity both !

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May,
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

But since he crossed the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo,—and—Lord knows what beside,
And swam for Love, as I for Glory ;

'Twere hard to say who fared the best :
Sad mortals ! thus the Gods still plague you !
He lost his labour, I my jest :
For he was drowned, and I've the ague.

TO GENEVRA.

SONNET.

THINE eye's blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
And the wan lustre of thy features—caught
From contemplation—where serenely wrought,
Seems Sorrow's softness charmed from its despair—
Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
That—but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
With mines of unalloyed and stainless thought—
I should have deemed thee doomed to earthly care.
With such an aspect, by his colours blent,
When from his beauty-breathing pencil born,
(Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent)
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn—
Such seem'st thou—but how much more excellent!
With nought Remorse can claim—nor Virtue scorn.

TO THE SAME.

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe,
And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush
Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
My heart would wish away that ruder glow :—
And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes—but, oh !
While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.

*

For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
The soul of melancholy Gentleness
Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
Above all pain, yet pitying all distress;
At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

In moments to delight devoted,
« My life ! » with tend'rest tone you cry ;
Dear words ! on which my heart had doted,
If youth could neither fade nor die.
To death even hours like these must roll,
Ah ! then repeat those accents never ;
Or change « my life ! » into « my soul ! »
Which, like my love, exists for ever.

TRANSLATION

OF

THE ROMAIC SONG:

« Μωينو μες ἦς περίβολι,
« Ὠραϊότατη Χανδῇ » etc.

The song from which this is taken is a great favourite with the young girls of Athens of all classes. Their manner of singing it is by verses in rotation, the whole number present joining in the chorus. I have heard it frequently at our « Χόροι, » in the winter of 1810-11. The air is plaintive and pretty.

I.

I ENTER thy garden of roses,
Beloved and fair Haidee,
Each morning where Flora reposes,
For surely I see her in thee.
Oh ! Lovely ! thus low I implore thee,
Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
Which utters its song to adore thee,
Yet trembles for what it has sung ;
As the branch, at the bidding of Nature,
Adds fragrance and fruit to the tree,
Through her eyes, through her every feature
Shines the soul of the young Haidee.

2.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
When Love has abandoned the bowers ;
Bring me hemlock—since mine is ungrateful,
That herb is more fragrant than flowers.

The poison, when poured from the chalice,
 Will deeply embitter the bowl;
 But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
 The draught shall be sweet to my soul.
 Too cruel ! in vain I implore thee
 My heart from these horrors to save :
 Will nought to my bosom restore thee ?
 Then open the gates of the grave.

3.

As the chief who to combat advances
 Secure of his conquest before,
 Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
 Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
 Ah ! tell me, my soul ! must I perish
 By pangs which a smile would dispel ?
 Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me cl
 For torture repay me too well ?
 Now sad is the garden of roses,
 Beloved, but false Haidee !
 There Flora all withered reposes,
 And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

SONG.

ATHENS, 1810.

Ζών μου, σάς ἀγαπῶ (1).

1.

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh ! give me back my heart !
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest !
Hear my vow before I go,
Ζών μου, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

2.

By those tresses unconfined,
Wooed by each Ægean wind ;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge ;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζών μου, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

(1) *Zoë mou, sas agapo*, or Ζών μου σάς ἀγαπῶ, a Romaic expression of tenderness : if I translate it I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that I supposed they could not ; and if I do not I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misinstruction on the part of the latter I shall do so begging pardon of the learned. It means, « My life, I love you ! » which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day as, Juvenal tells us, the two last words were amongst the Roman ladies, whose erotic expressions were all Hellenized.

3.

By that lip I long to taste ;
 By that zone-encircled waist ;
 By all the token-flowers (1) that tell
 What words can never speak so well ;
 By Love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώνη μου, σάς αγαπώ.

4.

Maid of Athens ! I am gone :
 Think of me, sweet ! when alone.—
 Though I fly to Istambol (2),
 Athens holds my heart and soul :
 Can I cease to love thee ? No !
Ζώνη μου, σάς αγαπώ.

(1) In the East (where ladies are not taught to write, &c. they should scribble assignations), flowers, cinders, pebbles, etc., convey the sentiments of the parties by that universal deputy of Mercury—an old woman. A cinder says, 'burn for thee ;' a bunch of flowers tied with hair, 'Take and fly ;' but a pebble declares—'what nothing else can

(2) Constantinople.

TO MARY.

1.

WELL ! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too ;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

2.

Thy husband's blest—and 'twill impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot :
But let them pass—Oh ! how my heart
Would hate him, if he loved thee not !

3.

When late I saw thy favourite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break ;
But when th'unconscious infant smiled,
I kissed it, for its mother's sake.

4.

I kissed it, and repressed my sighs
Its father in its face to see ;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me.

5.

Mary, adieu ! I must away :
While thou art blest I'll not repine ;
But near thee I can never stay ;
My heart would soon again be thine.

6.

I deemed that time, I deemed that pride
Had quenched at length my boyish flame;
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all, save hope, the same.

7.

Yet was I calm : I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look;
But now to tremble were a crime—
We met, and not a nerve was shook.

8.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there :
One only feeling could'st thou trace;
The sullen calmness of despair.

9.

Away! away! my early dream
Remembrance never must awake :
Oh! where is Lethe's fabled stream?
My foolish heart be still, or break.

EUTHANASIA.

1.

WHEN Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
Oblivion ! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed !

2.

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep, or wish, the coming blow :
No maiden, with dishevelled hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

3.

But silent let me sink to Earth,
With no officious mourners near :
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

4.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

5.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche ! to the last
Thy features still serene to see :
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

6.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath ;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

7.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan !
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

8.

« Ay, but to die, and go, » alas !
Where all have gone, and all must go !
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe !

9.

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

« O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
« Ducentium ortus ex animo : quater
« Felix ! in imo qui scatentem
« Pectore te , pia Nympha , sensit. »
GRAY'S *Poemata*.

1.

ERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it takes
away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull
decay ;
Not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone which
fades so fast,
The tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself
be past.

2.

When the few whose spirits float above the wreck of
happiness,
Driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess :
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
To shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch
again.

3.

When the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself
comes down ;
Cannot feel for other's woes, it dare not dream its own ;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our
tears,
Tho' the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice
appears.

4.

'Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract
the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former
hope of rest ;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and grey
beneath.

5.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanished
scene !
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish
though they be,
So midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would
flow to me.

1815.

ON A NUN⁽¹⁾.

SONNET

Composed in the name of a father whose daughter had recently died shortly after her marriage ; and addressed to the father of her who had lately taken the veil.

Of two fair virgins, modest, though admired,
Heaven made us happy, and now, wretched sires,
Heaven for a nobler doom their worth desires,
And gazing upon *either, both* required.
Mine, while the torch of Hymen newly fired,
Becomes extinguished, soon—too soon expires :
But thine within the closing grate retired,
Eternal captive, to her God aspires.
But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,
Which shuts between your never-meeting eyes,
May'st hear her sweet and pious voice once more :
I to the marble, where *my daughter* lies,
Rush,—the swoln flood of bitterness I pour,
And knock, and knock, and knock—but none replies.

(1) Translation from Vittorelli.

ON BEING ASKED

WHAT WAS THE « ORIGIN OF LOVE? »

THE « Origin of Love ! »—Ah why
That cruel question ask of me,
When thou may'st read in many an eye
He starts to life on seeing thee ?
And should'st thou seek his *end* to know :
My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,
He'll linger long in silent woe ;
But live—until I cease to be.

IMPROMPTU, IN REPLY TO A FRIEND.

WHEN from the heart where Sorrow sits,
Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o'er the changing aspect flits,
And clouds the brow, or fills the eye ;
Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink :
My thoughts their dungeon know too well ;
Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
And droop within their silent cell.

HEBREW MELODIES.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

I.

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen :
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

III.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed ;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still.

IV.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride :
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail ;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

VI.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wall,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS!

SUN of the sleepless ! melancholy star !
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
That show'st the darkness thou can'st not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remembered well !
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold !

SONG OF SAUL

BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

SAUL.

« **W**ARRIORS and Chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path :
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet !
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart !
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day !

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.
Samuel, raise thy buried head !
King, behold the phantom seer ! »

Earth yawned ; he stood the centre of a cloud :
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye ;
His hand was withered, and his veins were dry ;

His foot, in bony whiteness, glittered there,
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare :
From lips that moved not, and unbreathing frame,
Like caverned winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

SAMUEL.

- « Why is my sleep disquieted ?
 - « Who is he that calls the dead ?
 - « Is it thou, Oh King ? Behold
 - « Bloodless are these limbs, and cold :
 - « Such are mine ; and such shall be
 - « Thine, to-morrow, when with me :
 - « Ere the coming day is done,
 - « Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
 - « Fare thee well, but for a day ;
 - « Then we mix our mouldering clay.
 - « Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
 - « Pierced by shafts of many a bow ;
 - « And the falchion by thy side
 - « To thy heart, thy hand shall guide :
 - « Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
 - « Son and sire, the house of Saul ! »
-

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON

WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT.

I.

WE sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey ;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters !
Were scattered all weeping away.

II.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which rolled on in freedom below,
They demanded the song ; but , oh never,
That triumph the stranger shall know !
May this right hand be withered for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe !

III.

On the willow that harp is suspended,
Oh Salem ! its sound should be free ;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee ;
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me !

THE
WILD GAZELLE.

THE wild Gazelle on Judah's hills
Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
That gush on holy ground ;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
Hath Judah witnessed there ;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone !

More blest each palm that shades those plains,
Than Israel's scattered race ;
For, taking root, it there remains
In solitary grace :
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die ;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie :
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

I.

Oh! snatched away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

II.

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread:
Fond wretch! as if her step disturbed the dead!

III.

Away; we know that tears are vain,
That Death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

FROM JOB.

I.

A Spirit passed before me : I beheld
The face of Immortality unveiled—
Deep Sleep came down on ev'ry eye save mine—
And there it stood,—all formless—but divine :
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake ;
And as my damp hair stiffened, thus it spake :

II.

« Is man more just than God ? Is man more pure
« Than he who deems even seraphs in secure ?
« Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust !
« The most survives you, and are ye more just ?
« Things of a day !—You wither ere the night,
« Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light. »

THE END.

